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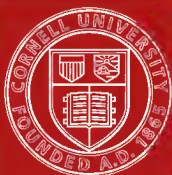
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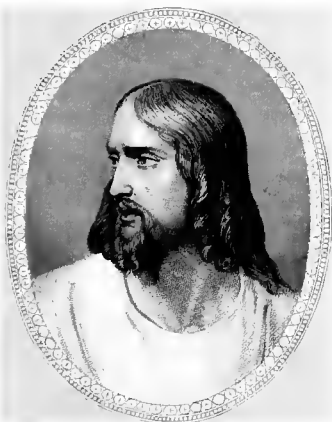
THE  
DESTINATION OF MAN.

BY  
JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

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Translated from the German,

BY  
MRS. PERCY SINNETT.



“ By the roaring billows of Time thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity.”—CARLYLE.

LONDON :  
CHAPMAN, BROTHERS, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE present translation was made several years ago, not then with a view to publication, but for the sake of obtaining a more intimate knowledge of a book that appeared of unusual interest and importance. Its faults therefore are at all events not those of haste or carelessness. Those who are acquainted with German philosophical language, will I believe admit the frequently great difficulty of finding in English, strictly corresponding terms; but with all the errors of which I am, or am not, conscious, I have great satisfaction in introducing it to the notice of English readers.

It is, as its author has declared, not intended merely for professed students, but for all who are capable of giving it some attention, and who take up a book with some more serious purpose than that of passing more easily an idle hour. The Idealism of Fichte differs, it will be seen, from that of Berkeley, with whose works also he was wholly unacquainted; and it will not escape the more critical reader, that, as I have already had occasion to notice,\* he has found it necessary to adopt ultimately, as a principle of metaphysical truth, that intuitive belief, or, as it is sometimes called, common sense of mankind, which he had rejected at first as the basis even of material reality.

To these beliefs—immediate, universal, irresistible, like the voice of the Creator speaking to us—we must it appears return, as to an ark of safety, after our longest flights.

The opinion that has prevailed so long in England, that German philosophy is a mere “metaphysical hocus pocus, or logical card castle,” that the speculations that have occupied the lives of some of the greatest thinkers that ever lived, have

\* In an article on Fichte's Life, in the Foreign Quarterly Review for October 1845, No. 71.

been always empty and futile, and barren of any practical result, is apparently fast giving way to one very different.

Such men as Fichte did not, assuredly, devote themselves to babbling "a jargon of vain philosophy," like the idle jugglers, with words, to whom the expression was applied, but believed that they had found truth, to them, infinitely precious. We may not be able to view it from the same point ; with our best efforts we may fail to see clearly, but we shall surely not improve our chance by shutting our eyes. Those also who have once entered on this path cannot well turn back, but must go on till they reach a resting place ; and assuredly they will gain nothing by attempting anything like self-deception or masquerading in the forms of a bygone time.

We may indeed look back with a sort of longing to those earlier ages, when, as it is commonly supposed at least, a tranquil childlike trust in all which on authority was taught, pervaded all minds, "and spread a universal peace o'er land and sea," in place of the restless fermentations, and anxious questionings that disturb us now. But whatever we may think of this, it is obvious we can no more return to the real temper of those times than to the stature of our childhood, and the effort to resume its outward habits will fail as completely as that of the elderly gentleman in Hoffmann's tale, who sought to restore the Idyllic joys of his infancy, by complimenting himself every Christmas Eve with an assortment of such playthings as delighted him in that happy period.

If however we have seen that this cannot be, may we not accept it as an assurance that it ought not to be ? May we not trust Providence so far as to believe that what is impossible for us, is neither necessary nor desirable ? A different task perhaps is assigned to us,—“There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit.”

London, Dec. 20th, 1845.

## PREFACE.

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WHATEVER of the recent philosophy is likely to prove serviceable beyond the limits of the schools, presented in the order in which it would naturally occur to an unsophisticated understanding, is intended to form the contents of this volume. The elaborate defences made only to meet the artificial objections and extravagances of the learned, have been deemed unnecessary here, and whatever serves only as a foundation for the positive sciences or for the deliberate and arbitrary education of the human race, has been omitted, as lying within the province of statesmen and the appointed teachers of the people.

The book is therefore not intended for philosophers by profession, who will find in it nothing that may not be found in other writings of the same author. It is intended to be intelligible to all readers who are able really to understand a book at all. Those who have accustomed themselves merely to the repetition of certain sets of phrases in varied order, and who mistake this operation of memory for that of the understanding, will probably find it unintelligible. It ought to exercise on the reader an attractive and animating power, raising him from the sensuous world, to that which is above sense. The author at least has not performed his task without some of this happy inspiration. Often during the labour of execution, the fire with which a design is entered upon becomes exhausted, but immediately on the conclusion of a work the author is scarcely

in a position to judge of this point. How far he has succeeded in the attainment of his proposed object he cannot decide; this must be determined by the effect produced on the readers to whom it is addressed. One remark, however, he deems it necessary to make—namely, that the “I” who speaks in the book is by no means intended for himself, but it is his earnest wish that it should represent the reader, who is entreated, not merely to apprehend historically what is here presented to him, but really and truly, during the reading of the book, to hold converse with his own mind, to reason, to draw conclusions, and to develop by his own mental effort the train of thought laid before him.

# THE DESTINATION OF MAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

### DOUBT.

At last, then, I may hope that I am tolerably well acquainted with the world that surrounds me. In the unanimous declaration of my senses, in unfailing experience alone have I placed my trust. What I have beheld, I have touched—what I have touched, I have analysed. I have repeated my observations again and again, I have compared the various phenomena together, and only when I could perceive their connection, when I could explain and deduce one from the other, and foresee the result, and that the result was such as to justify my calculations, have I been satisfied. Therefore am I now as well assured of the accuracy of this part of my knowledge, as of my own existence ; I walk with a firm step in this my world, and would stake welfare and life itself on the infallibility of my convictions.

But what then am I, and what is the aim and end of my being ? The question is superfluous. It is long since I have been made well acquainted with these points, and it would take much time to recapitulate all that I have heard, learnt, and believed concerning them. And by what means then have I attained this knowledge which I have this confused notion of possessing ? Have I, urged on by a burning desire of knowledge, toiled on through uncertainty and doubt and contradiction ? Have I, when any thing appeared credible, ex-

amined, and sifted, and compared, till an inward voice proclaimed, irresistibly, and without a possibility of mistake, "Thus it is, as surely as thou livest?"

No! I can remember no such state of mind. Those instructions were bestowed on me before I desired them, the answers were given before the questions were proposed. I heard, for I could not avoid doing so, and much of what I heard remained in my memory; but without examination, and without interest, I allowed every thing to take its place as chance directed. How then could I persuade myself that I really possessed any knowledge upon these points? If I can only be said to know that of which I am convinced, and which I have myself wrought out, myself experienced, I cannot truly say that I know anything at all of the aim and end of my being. I know merely what others profess to know, and all that I can really be assured of is, that I have heard them speak so and so upon these things.

Whilst then I have inquired into and examined for myself with the most anxious care, comparatively trivial matters; in things of the highest import I have relied wholly on the care and fidelity of others. I have attributed to others an interest in the highest affairs of humanity, an earnestness and accuracy which I by no means discover in myself. I have regarded them as indescribably superior to me. Whatever of truth they really possess, they can have attained by no other means than by their own meditations, and why may not I, by the same means, attain the same ends? How much have I undervalued and degraded myself!

It shall be no longer thus. From this moment I will enter on my rights, on the dignity to which I have a claim. Let all that is foreign to my own mind be at once renounced! I will examine for myself. It may be that secret wishes concerning the termination of my inquiries, that a partial inclination towards certain conclusions, will awaken in my heart. I will forget and deny these wishes, and allow them no influence in the direction of my



thoughts. I will go to work with scrupulous severity. What I find to be truth shall be welcome to me, let it sound as it may. I will *know*. With the same certainty with which I can calculate that this ground will bear me when I tread on it, that this fire will burn me if I approach too near it, will I know what I am, and what I shall be; and should this not be possible, thus much at least will I know, that it is not possible. Even to this result will I submit, if it should present itself to me as truth.

I hasten towards the fulfilment of my task. I seize on Nature as she hastens ever onward in her flight, detain her for an instant, and contemplate steadily the present moment,—this nature on which my thinking powers have been developed, and for which the conclusions, valid in her domain, have been formed.

I am surrounded by objects which I am compelled to regard as wholes, subsisting for themselves, and separately from each other. I behold plants, trees and animals, I ascribe to each individual certain signs and attributes by which I distinguish it from others; to this plant, such a form; to another, another; to this tree, such and such leaves; to another, others differing from them. Every object has its appointed number of attributes, neither more nor less. To every question, whether it is this or that, is, for any one acquainted with it, a decisive yes or no possible. Every thing that is, is something, or it is not—has a certain colour, or has it not—is tangible, or is not, and so on. Every object possesses its properties in an appointed degree, which it neither exceeds nor falls short of. Every thing that is, is definite, determined; is some one thing, and is not something else.

Not that I am unable to conceive an object hovering between opposite limitations. I am certainly able to do this, for half of my thoughts consist of such. I think of a tree in general. Has this tree leaves or not, fruit or not; and if so, in what quantities? To what species does it belong? How large is it? All these questions must remain unanswered,

for my thought is undetermined, and does not represent any particular tree, but a tree in general, and it has no real existence, for whatever really exists, has its appointed number of all its possible attributes, and each of these in its appointed measure, although I may never be able to comprehend all the properties of any one object, or to apply to them any standard.

Nature, however, hastens on through her everlasting transformations, and while I am speaking of the present moment, it is gone, and all is changed; in the same manner, the moment before my observation, all was otherwise, it had not always been as I found it, it had *become* so. Why then, and from what cause, had it become what it was? Why had Nature, amidst the manifold, infinite possible varieties of being, assumed precisely these, and no others? For this reason, that certain others had preceded them, and these in the same manner will determine those which shall follow; and these again others, to infinity. Were the smallest thing at the present moment different from what it is, then necessarily in the following moment would something else be different, and again in the succeeding one, and so on for ever. Nature in her never-ceasing changes follows steadily certain undeviating laws. I find myself in a close chain of phenomena, in which every link depends on that which has preceded it, so that if, at any given moment, I could be made acquainted with all existing conditions of the universe, I should be able to declare what they had been in the preceding moment, and what they would be in that which was to follow.

In every part I find the whole, for every part only, by means of the whole, has become what it is.

What I have discovered then I find amounts to this; that to every existence another must be pre-supposed, to every condition another preceding condition. Let me pause a little here, for it may happen, that on my clear insight into this point may depend much of the success of my future inquiry.

Why, and from what cause, I had asked, are the modifications of objects precisely such as I find them to be assuming

thus, without a moment's hesitation, and without proof, as an absolute and certain truth, that they had a cause,—that not by themselves, but by something beyond them, they had obtained existence and reality. I had found myself compelled to assume another existence as a necessary condition of theirs.

But why, then, did I find their existence insufficient to itself, incomplete? What betrayed to me a want in them? This, without doubt; that, in the first place, these qualities or attributes do not exist in and for themselves,—they are forms of something formed, modifications of something modified; and the conception of what, in the language of the schools, has been called a *substratum*, a something capable of receiving and supporting the attributes, must be always added to them. Further, that to such a substratum a certain quality is attributed, supposes a condition of repose, and cessation from change, otherwise there could be no determinate modification, but merely a passing from one state to another. A state of mere passivity is an incomplete existence; some activity is necessary to form what may be called the basis of the suffering. What I found myself compelled to suppose was by no means that in the successive changes which nature undergoes, one brings forth the other—that the present modification annihilates itself, and, in the next moment, when it no longer exists, produces another to occupy its place. The modification produces neither itself nor anything out of itself. What I found myself compelled to assume was an active force, peculiar to the object, to account for the gradual origin and the changes of those modifications. And what, then, do I conceive to be the nature or essence of this power, and the modes of its manifestation? I know no more than this, that it is capable, under certain conditions, of producing, certainly and infallibly, a determinative effect, and no other. The principle of activity, of *arising* and *becoming*, is certainly in itself. As surely as it is a force, it is capable of setting itself in motion;—the cause of its having developed itself in a certain

manner, lies partly in itself, as it is a force, and partly in the circumstances under which it develops itself. Both these—the inward determination of a force from itself, and the external, by circumstances, must be united to produce a given change.

Every force, so far as I can conceive of one, must be determinate, but its determination is completed by the circumstances under which it is developed. A force exists in my conception only so far as I can perceive its working. An inactive *force* is entirely inconceivable.

I see a flower that has sprung out of the earth, and I conclude that a formative power exists in nature. Such a formative power exists for me only so far as this flower and others, and plants, and animals exist. I can describe this power merely by its effect, and it exists for me no further than as producing flowers and plants, animals and other organic forms. I will go further, and maintain that a flower, and precisely this flower, could exist in this place, only so far as all circumstances united to make it possible; but that by the union of all these circumstances for its possibility, the real existence of the flower ~~is~~ by no means explained to me, and for this I am compelled to assume a peculiar original power in Nature, and precisely a flower producing power, for another power of Nature, under the same circumstances, might have produced something entirely different.

When I contemplate all things as one whole, I perceive one Nature—one force: when I regard them as individuals, many forces, which develop themselves according to their inward laws, and pass through all the forms of which they are capable; and all the objects in Nature are but those forces under certain limitations. Every manifestation of every individual power of Nature is determined—partly by itself, partly by its own preceding manifestations, and partly by the manifestations of all the other powers of Nature, with which it is connected; but it is connected with all—for nature is one connected whole. Its manifestations are, therefore, strictly

necessary; and it is absolutely impossible that it should be other than what it is.

In every moment of her duration, Nature is one connected whole; in every moment must every individual part be what it is, because all others are what they are, and a single grain of sand could not be moved from its place without, however imperceptibly to us, changing something throughout all parts of the immeasurable whole. Every moment of duration is determined by all past moments, and will determine all future moments; and even the position of a grain of sand cannot be conceived other than it is, without supposing other changes, to an indefinite extent. Let us imagine, for instance, this grain of sand lying some few feet further inland than it actually does; then must the storm-wind that drove it in from the sea shore have been stronger than it actually was;—then must the preceding state of the atmosphere, by which this wind was occasioned, and its degree of strength determined, have been different from what it actually was, and the previous changes which gave rise to this particular weather—and so on. We must suppose a different temperature from that which really existed,—a different constitution of the bodies which influenced this temperature: the fertility or barrenness of countries,—the duration of the life of man—depend, unquestionably, in a great degree upon temperature. How can we know, since it is not given us to penetrate the arcana of Nature, and it is therefore allowable to speak of possibilities;—how can we know, that in such a state of the weather as we have been supposing, in order to carry this grain of sand a few yards further, some ancestor of yours might not have perished from hunger, or cold, or heat, long before the birth of that son from whom you are descended, and thus you might never have been at all; and all that you have ever done, and all that you ever hope to do in this world, must have been hindered, in order that a grain of sand might lie in a different place?

## CHAPTER II.

### DOUBT.

I MYSELF, with all that I call mine, am but a link in this chain of rigid natural necessity. There was a time—so others tell me, and although I am not immediately conscious of it, I am compelled by reason to admit it as a truth,—there was a time in which I was not, and a moment in which I began to be. I then only existed for others—not yet for myself. Since then, myself, my conscious being, has gradually developed itself, and I have discovered in myself, certain faculties and capacities—wants and natural desires. I am a definite creature, which came into existence at a certain time.

I have not come into existence by my own power. It would be the highest absurdity to suppose that before I was at all, I could bring myself into existence: I have, then, been called into being by a power out of myself. And what should this be but the universal power of nature, of which I form a part? The time at which my existence commenced, and the attributes belonging to me, were determined by this universal power of Nature; and all the forms under which these, my inborn attributes, have since manifested themselves, have been determined by the selfsame power. It was impossible that instead of me, another should have arisen,—it is impossible that at any moment of my existence, I should be other than what I am.

That my successive states of being have been accompanied by consciousness, that some of them, such as thoughts, resolutions and the like, appear to be nothing but various modifi-

cations of consciousness, need not perplex my reasonings. It is the nature of the plant regularly to develop itself, of the animal to move towards the attainment of certain ends, of the man to think. Why should I hesitate to acknowledge the latter as an original power of nature, as well as the first and second? Nothing could prevent me from doing so, but the astonishment I feel at such a conclusion. Thought is assuredly a far higher and more subtle operation of nature, than the formation of a plant or the motion of an animal, I cannot explain how the power of nature can produce thought, but can I better explain its operation in the production of a plant, in the motion of an animal? To attempt to deduce thought from any mere organisation of matter, is an extravagance into which I shall not easily fall; but can I then explain from it the formation of the simplest moss? Those original powers of nature cannot be explained, for it is only through them that we can explain any thing. Thought exists in nature, as well as the creative power which gives birth to the plant. The thinking being arises and develops himself by natural laws, and exists through nature. There is therefore in nature an original thinking power, as well as an original plant-creating power.

This original thinking power advances and develops itself through all the modifications of which it is capable, as the other original forces of nature assume all possible forms. I, like the plant, am a particular manifestation of the formative power; like the animal, a particular manifestation of the power of motion, and in addition to these a particular manifestation of the thinking power; and it is the union of these three original forces in one harmonious development that makes the distinguishing characteristic of any species, as it is the distinguishing characteristic of the plant species, to be merely a manifestation of the plant-forming power.

Figure, motion, thought, in me, are not consequent on one another, but are the simultaneous and harmonious developments of what might be called the *man-forming* power, neces-

sarily manifesting itself in a creature of my species. I am not what I am, because I think so, or will so, nor do I think and will because I am, but I am, and I think, both absolutely.

As certainly as those original powers of Nature exist for themselves, and have their own internal laws and purposes, so certainly must their manifestations in the world of reality, if left to themselves and not subjected to any foreign force, endure for a certain period of time, and pass through a certain series of changes. That which should vanish at the moment of its production could not be the expression or manifestation of an original power, but only an effect of the combined operation of various powers. The plant when left to itself proceeds from the first germination to the ripening of the seed. Man, a particular manifestation of all the powers of Nature in their union, when left to himself, (no accident intervening) proceeds from birth to death in old age. Hence, the duration of the life of man and of plants, and the various modifications of this their life.

This form, this motion, this thought, this duration of all essential qualities, amidst many non-essential changes, belong to me as to a being of my species. But this *man-forming* power in Nature had displayed itself before the commencement of my existence, under various conditions and circumstances. These external circumstances have determined the particular mode of their present operation in the production of precisely such an individual of my species as I am. The same circumstances can never recur, or the whole of Nature must retrograde. The same individuals can never again receive reality. Further, the *man-forming* power of Nature has manifested itself, at the time of my production, under manifold conditions and circumstances. No combination of circumstances can perfectly resemble those under which I received existence, and unless the universe could be divided into two similar but unconnected worlds, two perfectly similar individuals cannot be produced.



By these conditions and circumstances, it was determined what this definite person *I* should become, and the laws by which I am that which I am, are universal. I am that which I am, because in the connection of the great whole, only such a one, and absolutely no other, was possible, and a spirit who could look through all Nature, would, from the knowledge of a single man, be able to determine what men had been before, and what they would be at any moment. In one person he would obtain the knowledge of all. This, my connection with the whole of Nature, it is, then, which determines what I have been, what I am, and what I shall be. The same spirit would be able, at any moment of my existence, to form infallible conclusions on what I had hitherto been, and what I was to be. All that I am and shall be, I am and shall be of necessity, and it is impossible that I should be otherwise.

I do, indeed, feel an inward consciousness of independence; of having, on many occasions in my life, exerted a free agency; but this consciousness may easily be explained, on the principles already laid down, and is perfectly reconcileable with the conclusions I have drawn. My immediate consciousness, my absolute perception, cannot go beyond myself,—I have immediate knowledge only of myself, whatever I know further I know only by reasoning, in the same manner in which I have come to those conclusions concerning the original powers of Nature, which certainly do not lie within the circle of my perceptions. I, however,—that which I call myself,—am not the man-forming power of Nature, but only one of its manifestations; and only of this manifestation am I conscious, not of that power, whose existence I have only discovered from the necessity of explaining my own. This manifestation, however, is certainly the production of an original and independent force, and must appear as such in my consciousness. For this reason do I appear to myself as a free agent in those occurrences of my life, in which the independent force, falling to my share as an individual, manifests itself without hindrance; but, as subject

to constraint, when, by any combination of circumstances beyond the limits of my individuality, I cannot do what I might otherwise be capable of doing,—when my individual force, by the excess of antagonist forces, is compelled to manifest itself otherwise than in accordance with its own laws. Bestow consciousness on a tree, and let it freely grow and spread out its branches, and bring forth leaves and buds, and blossoms and fruits, after its kind. It will be aware of no limits to its existence in being only a tree, and a tree of a certain species, and an individual of that species ; it will feel itself free, because, in all those manifestations, it will act according to its nature ; it can will nothing more than what that nature requires.

But let unfavourable weather, insufficient nourishment, or other causes, hinder its growth, and it will feel itself confined, restrained, because an impulse of its nature cannot be satisfied. Bind its free waving branches to a wall, force foreign branches on it by grafting, and it will feel itself constrained ; it will grow, but in a direction different from that of its own nature ; it will produce fruit, but not such as it would, of itself, have brought forth. In my immediate consciousness, I appear to myself as free ; by meditation on the whole of Nature, I discover that freedom is impossible ; the former must be subordinate to the latter, for it is only to be explained through it.

## CHAPTER III.

### DOUBT.

WITH what satisfaction do I now survey this system which my understanding has built up ! What order, what firm connection do I find in the whole of my knowledge—how easy is it to survey its extent ! Consciousness is no longer that anomaly in nature, whose relation to existence is so incomprehensible ; it is native to it—one of its necessary manifestations. Nature rises gradually in the definite series of her productions. In unorganised matter she is a simple existence ; in the plant and the animal, she turns back to operate internally on herself to produce form and motion ;—in man as her highest masterpiece, she perceives and contemplates herself, and becomes twofold, existence and consciousness in one. What I know of my own existence and of its limitations, is easy to explain. My existence and my knowledge have one common foundation in Nature. My existence must necessarily be aware of itself—for therefore do I call it *mine*,—and my recognition of corporeal objects without myself is equally comprehensible. The forces in whose manifestation my personality consists—the formative—the moving—the thinking powers, exist not through all Nature, but only within definite limits. By the limitation of my own being, I perceive other existences which are not me. Of the first I am immediately conscious, and the knowledge of the latter is its necessary consequence. Away, then, with those imaginary influences and operations of external things upon me, by means of which they are supposed to force upon me a knowledge which is not in and cannot proceed out of them. The foundation of my belief in

the existence of an external world lies in myself, and not in it, in the limitations of my own being. By means of these limitations, the thinking principle in me proceeds out of herself, and obtains a knowledge of the whole, but every individual regards it from a different point of view.

In this manner, I obtain the idea of other thinking beings like myself. I, or the thinking power within me, become aware of some thoughts which have developed themselves from within, and of others, which, not having so developed themselves, lead me to infer the existence of other thinking beings like myself. Nature, in me, is conscious of the whole of herself, but only thus; that beginning with individual consciousness, she proceeds to the consciousness of universal being, by explanation according to the law of causality. The law of causality affords a point of transition, from the particular within myself to the universal which lies beyond the limits of my being, and the distinguishing characteristic of these two kinds of knowledge is, that one is the immediate result of contemplation, the other of reasoning.

In each individual, Nature beholds herself from a different point of view. I lie beyond thee, as thou beyond me. From our several points we describe various paths which may here and there intersect each other, but never run parallel.

In the consciousness of all individuals taken together, consists the complete consciousness of the universe, and there is no other; for only in the individual is limitation and reality.

The declaration of the consciousness of every individual is infallible, if it be the consciousness hitherto described; for this consciousness develops itself out of the whole course of the laws of Nature. Nature cannot contradict herself; wherever there is a conception, there must be a correlative existence, for conceptions are produced simultaneously with their correlatives. To every individual is his particular consciousness determinate; for it proceeds from his Nature. No one can have another kind or degree of it than he actually has. The substance of his knowledge is determined by the

place which he occupies in the universe; its clearness and vividness, by the higher or lower degree of efficacy manifested by the force of humanity in his person. Give to Nature a single definition of a person, let it be ever so apparently trivial; the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair, she would be able, had she a universal consciousness, to declare what would be his whole course of thought, during his whole course of being.

According to this system also, it is easy to comprehend the phenomenon of our consciousness called the will. Will is the immediate consciousness of the activity of the inward powers of our Nature. The immediate consciousness of an effort, an aspiration of these powers which is not yet activity, because restrained by opposing forces—this is inclination or desire; the struggle of contending forces is irresolution; the victory of one is the resolution of the will.

Should the force, striving after activity, be one that we have in common with the plant or the animal, there arises a discord and degradation of our inward being, the desire is not suitable to our rank in the order of things, and according to a common expression, may be called a low one. Should it comprehend our whole undivided humanity, it is suitable to our nature, and may be called a moral law. The activity of this latter is a virtuous will, and the actions resulting from it are virtue.

Whichever of these forces should obtain the victory, obtains it of necessity; its superiority is determined by the whole connection of the universe. By the same connection also is the want of virtue or the vice of each individual irrevocably determined.\* But, notwithstanding this, virtue is still virtue; and vice, vice. The virtuous man is still a noble, excellent *production* of nature; the vicious, an ignoble and

\* Give to Nature again the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair, in a certain individual, and could she answer thee, she would be able to foretell all his good and evil deeds, from the beginning to the end of his life.

contemptible one : but both are equally creatures of necessity.

There is, indeed, such a feeling as remorse ; the consciousness of the continued aspiration of humanity in me, even after it has been overcome ; a disquieting, but still costly pledge of our noble nature.

From this consciousness arises the conscience, and its greater or less susceptibility, down to its absolute defection in various individuals. An ignoble nature is not capable of repentance, for the force of humanity in him is not capable of contending with the lower impulses. Reward and punishment, are the natural consequences of virtue and vice, for the production of new virtue and new vice. By frequent and important victories, the peculiar force is strengthened and extended ; by inactivity or frequent defeat, it becomes weaker and weaker. The ideas of guilt, of imputed transgression, have no meaning but what relates to the laws of society. He only is guilty, who compels society to employ an artificial external force, to restrain in him the impulses which would be injurious to the general welfare.

## CHAPTER IV.

### DOUBT.

MY inquiry is closed, and my desire of knowledge satisfied. I know what I am, and wherein consists the nature of my species. I am a manifestation of a self-determining power of Nature, whose operation is determined by the whole of the universe.

It is impossible for me to obtain an insight into my individual being in its foundations, for I cannot penetrate into the interior of Nature; but I have an immediate consciousness of what I am at the present moment, I can mostly remember what I have been, and I shall learn in due time what I shall be.

This discovery can indeed be of no use to me in the regulation of my actions, for I do not truly act at all; Nature acts in me, and to make myself other than what Nature has made me, is totally out of my power.

I may repent, and rejoice, and form good resolutions,—although, strictly speaking, I cannot even do this; for all these things come to me of themselves, when it is appointed for them to do so.

Most certainly I cannot, by all my repentance, by all my resolutions, produce the smallest alteration in the appointed course of things. I stand under the inexorable power of rigid Necessity; should she have destined me to become a fool and a profligate, a fool and a profligate, without doubt, I shall become. Should she have destined me to be wise and good, wise and good I shall doubtless be. There is neither merit nor blame to be ascribed to her or to me. She stands under

her own laws, I under hers. It would therefore contribute to my tranquillity to subject even my wishes to that power to which my existence is entirely subject.

Oh these rebellious wishes ! For why should I longer conceal from myself the melancholy, the aversion, the horror which seized me when I saw how my inquiry must end. I had solemnly promised myself that my inclinations should have no influence on the course of my reflections, and as far as I am aware I have really allowed them none. But may I not confess that this result contradicts the deepest wants, wishes, aspirations of my nature ? And how, in spite of its apparent accuracy, and the cutting sharpness of the proofs by which it seems to be supported, can I truly believe in an explanation of my nature which destroys every hope for which I wish to live, and without which I should curse my existence ? Why should my heart mourn at, and be lacerated by that which so perfectly satisfies my understanding ? When nothing in Nature contradicts itself, is the life of man only a perpetual contradiction—or perhaps not the life of man in general, but only of me and of those who resemble me ? Had I but remained content in the pleasant delusions that surrounded me, been satisfied with the consciousness of my existence without those anxious questionings whose solution has made me miserable ! But if this solution be the true one, I could do no otherwise than I have done. I did not raise these difficulties, but the thinking nature within me raised them. I was destined to this misery, and I mourn in vain the innocent unconsciousness which is lost to me for ever.

But let me take courage ! Should I lose all else, let that never forsake me. Merely for the sake of my wishes, did they appear ever so sacred, or did they lie ever so deep in my heart, I cannot renounce what appears to rest on irrefragable proofs. But I may perhaps have erred in my investigation ? I may have taken but a one-sided, or too narrow view of the question. I should begin the inquiry again from the opposite point. What is it that I find so revolting in the decision to which I



have come? To what did my wishes point? Let me before all things make clear to myself what are the inclinations to which I appeal.

That I should by necessity be either wise and good, or foolish or vicious, without having in one case or the other merit or fault—this it was that filled me with aversion and horror. The determination of my actions by a cause out of myself, whose manifestations were again determined by other causes—this it was from which I so violently revolted. The freedom which was not mine, but that of a foreign power, and, in that, only a conditional, half freedom—this it was with which I could not rest satisfied. I myself—that which in this system only appears as the manifestation of a higher existence, I will be independent,—will be something, not by another or through another, but of myself.

The rank which in that system is assumed by an original power of Nature I will myself occupy, with this difference, that the modes of my manifestations shall not be limited by any foreign powers. I will have an inward force, a peculiar capacity of manifold, infinite manifestation like those powers of Nature, but whose movements shall not be, like theirs, limited or defined by external conditions. What then, according to my wish, shall be the seat and centre of this peculiar inward force? Not my body, evidently, for that I willingly allow to pass for a manifestation of the powers of Nature; not my sensual inclinations, for these I regard as the relations of these powers to my consciousness. My capacities of thought and of volition then? Nothing will content me but absolute freedom of the will, by means of which I may act on, and mould, and move, first my own frame, and through it the world surrounding me. My active natural powers shall be subordinate to my will, and absolutely set in motion by no other force. I will have freedom to seek a supreme spiritual good, and a capacity to recognise it; and if I do not find it, the fault shall be mine. My actions shall be the immediate result of my own will, and of no other power whatever. The

powers of my mind and body, determined and subject to the dominion of my will, shall operate on the external world. I will be the lord of Nature, and she shall be my servant. I will influence her according to the measure of my capacity, but she shall have no influence on me.

These then are my wishes and aspirations, and they are wholly denied and contradicted by a system that has nevertheless satisfied my understanding. Instead of being independent of Nature, and of any spiritual law not self imposed, I am merely a definite link in her mighty chain. If such a freedom as I have desired be at all conceivable, it is possible that a more complete and thorough investigation may discover it to me, and compel me to receive it as a reality, and to ascribe it to myself, so as to afford an entire refutation of my former conclusions. This is now the question:—

I will be free in the sense stated, I will make myself whatever I shall be. I must then, and herein lies the difficulty, and indeed at first sight the absurdity of the idea, I must already be in a certain sense that which I would become in order to become so; I must possess a twofold being, of which the first shall contain the *fundamental* determining principle of the second. If I interrogate my consciousness, I find that I have the knowledge of various probabilities of action, from amongst which, as it appears to me, I can choose any one. I run through the whole circle, enlarge it, compare one with the other, and at length decide on one, and this resolution of my will is followed by a corresponding action. Here then certainly I am in thought, what subsequently, by means of this thought, I am in will and in action. I am as a thinking, what I afterwards am as an active being. I have determined my existence in reality by my thought, and my thought absolutely by previous thought. One can conceive of any certain state of a mere manifestation of one of the powers of Nature, of a plant for instance, as preceded by another indeterminate state, in which, left to itself, it might have assumed any one of an infinite variety of possible modifications. These mani-

fold possibilities certainly exist in it, but not *for* it, since it is not capable of the idea, and cannot choose, or of itself put an end to this state of indecision : this must be effected by an external cause, which will determine it to one or other of these various possibilities. This possible determination can have no previous existence in thought, for the plant is capable of only one mode, that of real existence. In maintaining formerly that the manifestation of every force must receive its complete determination from without, I took cognizance without doubt only of such as are incapable of consciousness, and have merely an existence in the phenomenal world. Of them the above assertion holds true without the slightest limitation. With respect to intelligences, the grounds of this assertion are not admissible, and it appears, therefore, over hasty to extend it to them.

Freedom, such as I have described, is conceivable only of intelligence ; but under its assumption man, as well as nature, is perfectly comprehensible. My corporeal frame, and my capacity of operating on the world of sense, are, as in the former system, manifestations of certain powers existing in Nature, and my natural inclinations are the relations of these manifestations to my consciousness. The mere cognition of what exists independently of me arises under this supposition of freedom, as well as in the former system, and so far both agree. But here begins the contradiction : under the former system my capacity of sensuous activity remains under the dominion of Nature, and is set in motion by the same power which produced it, and thought has no other affair than that of looking on ; according to the present system, this capacity, when once produced, falls under the dominion of a power above Nature, and entirely superior to her laws. The office of thought is no longer merely to contemplate, but to set in motion this capacity. In the one case, forces, to me external and invisible, put an end to my state of indecision, and limit my capacity and my consciousness of it, that is to say, my will, to a certain point, exactly as in the plant ; in the other

I find myself free, and independent of the influence of all external forces, putting a voluntary end to the state of indecision, and determining my own action, according to the degree of knowledge I may have attained, of what appears best.

Which of these two opinions shall I adopt? Am I a free agent, or am I merely the manifestation of a foreign power? Neither appear sufficiently well founded. For the first there is nothing more to be said than that it is conceivable. In the latter I extend a proposition perfectly valid on its own ground, further than it can properly reach. If Intelligences are indeed merely manifestations of a certain power of Nature, I do quite right to extend this proposition to them. The question is only whether they really are such, and it shall be solved by reasoning from other premises, not however from a one-sided answer assumed at the very commencement of the inquiry, in which I deduce no more from the proposition than I have previously placed in it. There does not seem to be sufficient proof of either of these two positions. The case cannot be decided by immediate consciousness; I can never become conscious either of the external forces which in the system of universal necessity determine my actions, nor of my own individual power, by which, under the supposition of free agency, I determine myself.

Whichever of the two systems I shall adopt, it appears that I must do so without sufficient proof.

The system of freedom satisfies—the opposite one kills,—annihilates the feelings of my heart. To stand by, cold and passive, amidst the vicissitudes of events, a mere mirror to reflect the fugitive forms of objects floating by, such an existence as this is insupportable to me; I despise and renounce it. I will love!—I will lose myself in sympathy for another! I am to myself, even, an object of the highest sympathy, which can be satisfied only by my actions. I will rejoice and I will mourn. I will rejoice when I have done what I call right, I will lament when I have done wrong, and even this sorrow

shall be dear to me, for it will be a pledge of future amendment. In love only is life, without it is death and annihilation. Coldly and insolently does the opposite system advance, and turn this love into a mockery; the object of my deepest attachment into a delusion, a cobweb of the brain. It is not I, but a foreign, and to me unknown power that acts in me. I stand abashed with my affections of the heart, and my virtuous will, and blush for what is best and purest in my nature, for the sake of which alone I wish to be at all, as for an absurdity and a folly. What is holiest to me has become a prey for scorn.

It was without doubt my interest in these feelings and affections which induced me, although unconsciously, in the commencement of the inquiry which has driven me to despair, to regard myself at once as free and independent, and it was also this interest which has led me to carry out, even to conviction, an opinion which has nothing in its favour but its possibility, and the impossibility of proving the contrary; it was this which has hitherto restrained me from this undertaking, from the attempt to explain my own nature and existence.

The opposite system, barren and heartless indeed, but inexhaustible in explanation, will explain also this wish for freedom, and this aversion to the contrary supposition. It explains all my objections drawn from my own consciousness, and as often as I say I find thus and thus, it replies with the same horrible calmness, "that I say also, and more than that I will explain why it is of *necessity* thus." "Thou standest," will it answer to my complaints, "when thou speakest of thy heart, thy love, thy sympathy, at the point of immediate consciousness of thine own being, and thou hast confessed this already in asserting that thou art to thyself an object of the highest interest. Now it is already known and proved, that this *thou* for whom thou art so deeply interested, where it is not an active force, is at least an impulse of thy individual inward nature; it is well known that every impulse re-acts on itself, and incites itself to action; it is therefore conceivable how this impulse must manifest itself

in a conscious being, as love, as aspiration after free individual efficacy.

“Couldst thou change thy narrow point of vision in self-consciousness for the higher one of the universe, which thou hast promised thyself to take, it would become clear to thee, that what thou hast named *thy* self-love is but the interest which the power manifesting itself in thee has to maintain itself in this manifestation. Do not then appeal again to thy self-love, which, if it could prove anything, would merely prove that Nature in thee was interested in her own preservation. Thou hast readily admitted, that although in the plant there exists a peculiar instinct or impulse to grow and develop itself, the activity of this impulse is defined and limited by forces lying beyond itself. Bestow for the moment consciousness upon the plant, and it will contemplate, with interest and self-love, this its instinct of growth. Convince it by reasoning that this instinct is not able of itself to effect any thing whatever, but that the measure of its expression of itself is always determined by something out of itself, and it will perhaps speak as thou hast spoken, and behave in a manner that may be pardoned in a plant, but by no means in thee, who art unquestionably a higher production of Nature, and capable of contemplating the universal whole.”

What can I answer to this representation? Should I attempt to place myself in this much-talked-of universal point of vision, doubtless I must blush and be silent. It is therefore a question, whether I shall do this, or confine myself to the range of my own consciousness; whether knowledge shall be subordinated to love or love to knowledge. The one has but a bad reputation among people of understanding, the other renders me indescribably miserable, by annihilating myself in myself. I cannot do the one without appearing in my own eyes to commit a folly, nor the other without what seems a moral suicide.

The question cannot remain undecided; for on its solution hangs the whole dignity and tranquillity of my existence. I

find it nevertheless impossible to decide, and have absolutely no grounds of decision for one opinion or the other. Intolerable state of uncertainty and irresolution. By the most courageous resolve of my life am I reduced to this! what Power can save me from it, from myself?

## CHAPTER V.

### KNOWLEDGE.

SORROW and anxiety corroded my heart. I cursed the day which recalled me to an existence in whose truth and significance I could no longer trust. I awakened in the night from unquiet dreams, but I sought in vain for a ray of spiritual light that might lead me out of the labyrinth of doubt in which I had become entangled.

Once, at the hour of midnight, a wondrous spirit appeared to pass before me, and to address me,—

“Poor mortal,” I heard it say, “thou heapest error upon error, and fanciest thyself wise. Thou tremblest before the terrible pictures which thou hast thyself toiled to create. Take courage to be truly wise. I bring thee no new revelation. All that I can teach thee thou already knowest, and I need but recall it to thy remembrance. I cannot deceive thee, for thou, thyself, wilt declare me in the right, and shouldest thou be deceived, thou wilt deceive thyself. Listen then, and reply to my questions.”

I took courage. “The appeal is to be made to my own understanding, and I will rely on its decision. He cannot force me to think otherwise than I do think. What is to produce conviction in me must be the result of my own reasoning. Speak, Wonderful Spirit!” I exclaimed, “whatever thou art. Speak, and I will listen. Question me, and I will answer.”

*The Spirit.* Thou wilt admit that the objects thou seest around thee really have existence out of thyself?

*I.* Certainly I do.



*Spirit.* And how then dost thou know of this existence?

*I.* I see them, hear them, feel them. They discover themselves to me through all my senses.

*Spirit.* Indeed! Thou wilt perhaps presently be inclined to take back the assertion that thou really seest, feelest, and hearest these objects. For the present I will speak in thine own manner, as if by means of thy sight, touch, and hearing, and by them only, thou didst perceive the real existence of objects. But observe, by *means of* thy sight, touch, and other senses. Or is it not so? Dost thou perceive them otherwise than through thy senses, and can an object be said to exist for thee, otherwise than that thou seest, hearest it, &c.?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Objects are therefore perceptible merely in consequence of a certain modification of the external senses. Thou knowest of their existence merely by thy knowledge of this affection or modification of thy sight, touch, &c. The phrase thou hast employed—‘these objects exist out of myself,’ resolves itself into this—‘I see, hear, feel, and so forth?’

*I.* This is my meaning.

*Spirit.* And how then dost thou know that thou seest, hearest, feelest, and so forth?

*I.* I do not understand thee. Thy questions appear to me unintelligible.

*Spirit.* I will endeavour to explain them. Dost thou see thy sight, and feel thy touch, or hast thou a higher sense, by which thou perceivest the affection of thy organs of sense?

*I.* I have not. I know immediately that I see and feel, and what I see and feel. I know this immediately and absolutely. I know it because it is, and not at all by the intervention of any other sense. For this reason thy question appeared strange to me, because it appeared to throw a doubt on this immediate perception.

*Spirit.* This was not my intention. I wished only to induce thee to make clear to thyself this immediate perception. Thou hast therefore an immediate consciousness of sight and

touch. Thou art conscious of a certain affection of *thyself*?

*I.* Doubtless I am.

*Spirit.* Thou hast a consciousness of thy seeing, feeling, and so forth, and thereby thou obtainest a perception of the object. Couldst thou not perceive it without this consciousness? Canst thou not perceive the existence of an object by sight or touch, without knowing that thou seest or touchest?

*I.* Certainly not.

*Spirit.* It is then the immediate consciousness of thyself, and of the modifications of thyself, which forms the necessary condition of all other consciousness. Thou canst not know any thing, without knowing that thou knowest it?

*I.* Certainly I cannot.

*Spirit.* Therefore that objects exist, knowest thou only inasmuch as thou seest, touchest them, and so forth, and that thou seest or touchest, thou hast an immediate consciousness. In all perception, thou perceivest only thyself and thine own state, and what does not affect this state is not perceived at all?

*I.* I have already admitted this.

*Spirit.* I would repeat it, in every variety of form, if I saw reason to doubt that thou hadst thoroughly comprehended, and permanently impressed it on thy mind. Canst thou say, I am conscious of external objects?

*I.* By no means, if I speak accurately; for the sight and touch by which I perceive objects are not consciousness itself, but only that of which I am first and most immediately conscious. Strictly speaking, I can say no more than that I am conscious of seeing and touching.

*Spirit.* Remember then what thou hast now clearly understood, that *in all perception thou perceivest only thine own state of being*. I will, however, continue to speak thy language, since it is most familiar. Thou hast said that thou canst see, hear, and feel objects. How then, with what attributes, dost thou see or feel them?

*I.* I see this object blue, that red. When I touch them, I find this smooth, that rough—this cold, that warm.

*Spirit.* Thou knowest then what is red and blue, cold and warm, smooth and rough?

*I.* Undoubtedly I do.

*Spirit.* Wilt thou then explain to me what they are?

*I.* That cannot be explained. Look! Direct thine eye towards that object, the sensation of which thou art conscious, through thy vision, I call red. Touch the surface of this object, what thou feelest, I call smooth. In the same way I have arrived at this knowledge, and there is no other method.

*Spirit.* But can we not at all events, from some of these qualities, known immediately by sensation, deduce a knowledge of others differing from them? If, for instance, any one had seen red, green and yellow, but never a blue colour; had tasted sour, sweet and salt, but never bitter,—could he not, by reflection and comparison, attain to a knowledge of what was blue or bitter, without having ever seen or tasted either?

*I.* Certainly not. What is matter of sensation can only be felt, not thought. We cannot obtain it by deduction, it must be by immediate perception.

*Spirit.* Strange! That thou shouldst boast of a kind of knowledge, which thou hast attained thou knowst not how! Thou hast asserted that thou canst see a quality in one object, feel one in other, hear one in a third, and thou must, therefore, be able to distinguish sight from touch, and both from hearing?

*I.* Without doubt.

*Spirit.* Thou wilt maintain further, that this object is blue, that red, this smooth, that rough. Thou must therefore be able to distinguish red from blue, and smooth from rough?

*I.* Most certainly.

*Spirit.* And this difference has been discovered according to thine own assertion, not by reflection and comparison of

thine own sensations, therefore perhaps by comparison of objects out of thyself?

*I.* This is impossible, for my perception of objects proceeds from my perception of the variations of my own state of being, and depends upon it. By these variations only do I distinguish objects at all. I learn indeed to connect these sensations with the arbitrary signs, red, blue, smooth and rough; but I do not *learn* to distinguish the sensations themselves; this I do immediately. I cannot, indeed, describe how they differ, but I know that they must differ as much as the sensations they produce.

*Spirit.* And thou canst distinguish these independently of all knowledge of the objects themselves?

*I.* I *must* so distinguish them, for my knowledge of things in themselves depends on these distinctions.

*Spirit.* Which knowledge is obtained, therefore, merely through thy consciousness of the various states or affections of thine own being?

*I.* By no other means.

*Spirit.* But in this case, thou shouldst content thyself with saying,—“I feel myself affected in the manner that I call red, blue, smooth, rough.” Thou shouldst assert nothing further of these, than that they are sensations existing in thyself, and not transfer them to an object lying entirely out of thyself, and declare them to be modifications of those objects, whilst they are in fact only modifications of thyself. Or dost thou by calling things red, blue, and so forth, really mean any thing more than that thou art affected in a certain manner by them?

*I.* I perceive that I really know no more than what thou sayest, and that transposition of what is in me to something out of myself is very strange, though nevertheless I cannot refrain from it. My sensations are in myself and not in the object, for I am myself and not the object. I am conscious only of my own state, and not of that of the object, and if there be any such thing as consciousness of

the object, it can be neither sensation nor perception. Thus much is clear.

*Spirit.* Thy conclusions are quickly formed. Let us look at this matter on all sides, that I may be sure that thou wilt not some time or other wish to draw back from what thou hast now freely admitted. Is there then in the object, according to thy usual conception of it, any thing more than its red colour, its smooth surface, and so on; in short, any thing besides the characteristic marks of which by sensation thou art conscious?

*I.* I believe there is: besides these qualities there is the thing itself to which they belong: a supporter of these attributes.

*Spirit.* But by what sense dost thou perceive this supporter of attributes? Dost thou see it, or feel it, or what; or is there perhaps for this a peculiar sense?

*I.* No. I believe that I see and feel it.

*Spirit.* Indeed! Let us examine this a little more closely: art thou then conscious of sight absolutely, or only of seeing certain things?

*I.* My consciousness of sight is always limited to certain objects.

*Spirit.* And what was this limited consciousness of sight, with respect to the object before us?

*I.* That of red colour.

*Spirit.* And this red is something positive, a simple sensation, a certain state of thine own existence?

*I.* This I comprehend.

*Spirit.* Thy conception therefore should be simply of a redness, and nothing more. But the conception is nevertheless of red extended over a broad surface, a surface which thou dost not see. How is this?

*I.* I believe I can explain it, though it is strange I do not indeed see the surface, but I feel it when I pass my hand over it, and as my sensation of sight remains the same during that action, I imagine the red extended over the surface, since I always see the same red.

*Spirit.* It may be so if thou feelest only a surface, but let us see if this be really the case. Thy sense of touch is not absolute; that is, thou art always conscious of touching something?

*I.* Certainly. Sensation is always definite; we never merely see, or hear, or feel, but always see colour, red, green, blue; feel smooth, rough, cold, warm; hear the voice of man, the sound of the violin. Let that be settled between us once for all.

*Spirit.* Willingly. And in what thou hast called feeling a surface, thou art immediately conscious of nothing more than of feeling smooth or rough, and so on?

*I.* Certainly.

*Spirit.* This smooth or rough is like the red colour: a sensation entirely simple; and I ask why this simple sensation should be extended in thy conception over a surface any more than the simple sensation of sight.

*I.* This smooth surface is not perhaps in all points equally smooth, but is merely so in various degrees, only that language does not afford me any signs by which to express their differences. I distinguish them however unconsciously, and conceiving them as placed by the side of each other. I thus form the conception of surface.

*Spirit.* But canst thou have opposite sensations at the same moment, be affected at the same time in such different ways?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Those various degrees of smoothness, which thou hast assumed in order to attempt to explain what thou canst not explain, are nevertheless nothing more than various and successive sensations?

*I.* I cannot deny this.

*Spirit.* Thou shouldst then describe them according to thy real experience, as existing successively to one another in time, and not as simultaneously existing in space.

*I.* I see this, and I find that nothing is gained by my assumption. But my hand, with which I touch the object, and

cover it, is itself a surface, and by it I perceive the other surface, which is also a greater one, since I can spread my hand several times upon it.

*Spirit.* Thy hand is a surface ! How dost know thou that ? How dost thou attain the consciousness of thy hand at all ? Is there any other way, than that by means of it thou canst feel other objects, or that it can be employed as an implement or tool, or that thou perceivest it by its touching some other part of thy body ?

*I.* No. There is no other way. I feel with my hand some other object, or I feel the hand itself by the sensation of some other part of my body. I have no immediate, absolute consciousness of my hand, any more than of the sense of sight or touch in general.

*Spirit.* Let us take the case merely in which the hand is regarded as an implement, for that will decide at the same time the second. In the immediate perception of it can lie nothing further than what belongs to touch and to sensation in general ; to that which leads thee in consciousness to regard thyself as the conscious being. Either thy sensation is of the same kind, in which case I cannot see why thou shouldst extend it over a surface, and not rather conceive of it as of a point ; or if thy sensations are various, why thou dost not conceive of them as *succeeding* one another at the same point. That thy hand should appear to thee as a surface, is just as inexplicable as the idea of a surface in general. Do not employ what is itself unexplained to explain anything further. The second case in which thy hand or any other member is itself the object of sensation, is easily understood from the first. Thou perceivest it by means of another part, which then becomes the sentient one. I ask the same question concerning it, and thou wilt just as little be able to answer. So will it be with every other surface. It may be that the consciousness of extension out of thyself, proceeds from the consciousness of thine own extension as a material

body, and depends upon it; but it is then necessary to explain this extension of thy material body.

*I.* It is enough. I perceive clearly that I neither see nor feel the superficial extension of the properties of bodies; I see that it is my constant practice to conceive as extended over a surface what nevertheless in sensation is merely a point, and to represent as contemporaneously existing, what I know only as successive. I discover that I proceed in fact exactly as the geometer does in the construction of his figures, extending points to lines and lines to surfaces. It seems strange that I should do so.

*Spirit.* Thou dost what is yet more strange. This outer surface, this extension, thou canst not indeed truly see or feel, or perceive by any sense, but at least thou canst see red upon it and feel smoothness. But why dost thou extend this surface to a solid mathematical figure, and assume the existence of an inward body beneath the surface? Canst thou see it, feel it, or by any sense recognise its existence?

*I.* By no means. The space within the surface is impenetrable to my senses.

*Spirit.* And yet thou hast assumed the existence of an interior which thou hast not perceived by any sense?

*I.* I confess it, and my surprise increases.

*Spirit.* What is then this something beneath the surface?

*I.* I conceive of it as of something similar to the surface, something tangible.

*Spirit.* We must examine this more closely. Canst thou divide the mass in which thou hast imagined the body to consist?

*I.* I can. Of course I do not mean with instruments, but in thought divide it to infinity. No part can be so small as not to be further divisible.

*Spirit.* And in this division dost thou ever reach a point at which these particles become no longer perceptible in themselves? I say *in themselves*, that is, not merely with reference to thy senses.



*I.* I do not.

*Spirit.* Sensible, perceptible absolutely? Or with certain properties of colour, roughness, smoothness and the like?

*I.* Undoubtedly with certain properties. Nothing can be sensible or perceptible absolutely, without reference to any property that can be perceived.

*Spirit.* This is but to extend to the mass the susceptibilities that belong to thyself, which lead thee to regard what is visible as coloured, what is tangible as rough, smooth, and the like. Yet these things are only certain affections of thine own organs of sense. Or dost thou think otherwise?

*I.* By no means. This is merely a necessary inference from what I have already admitted.

*Spirit.* And yet thou hast in reality no perception but of a surface?

*I.* By breaking it, I could perceive an interior.

*Spirit.* So much thou knowest therefore in advance. And this infinite divisibility—in which as thou hast maintained thou canst not reach a point at which the atoms become absolutely imperceptible, hast thou ascertained it by experiment, or canst thou do so?

*I.* Certainly I cannot.

*Spirit.* To sensations therefore which thou hast had, thou hast added in thy conception others which thou hast not had, and canst not have?

*I.* I am sensible only of a surface. I am not sensible of what lies beneath it, yet I assume that it exists. This I must admit.

*Spirit.* And when brought to the test of experiment, the real sensation is found to correspond with thy preconception?

*I.* Certainly. When I break through the surface of a body, I find beneath, something perceptible, as I have before said.

*Spirit.* But thou hast also spoken of something beyond the senses, and not perceptible to them.

*I.* I have asserted that in the division of a corporeal mass to infinity, I can never come to what is in itself imperceptible, although I can never make this division.

*Spirit.* Of the object, therefore, we have nothing remaining but what is perceptible—what possesses the property of producing sensation. And this perceptibility thou hast extended through a cohesive mass divisible to infinity, so that the true supporter of attributes, the object which thou hast sought, must, after all, be nothing more than the space which it occupies ?

*I.* Although I cannot be satisfied with this, but must still conceive in the object something more than this property of perceptibility, and the space which it occupies, yet I must confess that I cannot explain what that is.

*Spirit.* Confess whatever really appears to thee at the moment to be true. What is now dark will presently become brighter, and the unknown be made known. The space itself is not perceived, and thou canst not understand why this perceptibility should be extended in conception through a space. Just as little canst thou understand how the idea of something perceptible out of thyself has been attained, since thou art really conscious of a sensation in thyself, not as the property of a thing, but as the peculiar affection or state of thine own being.

*I.* I see clearly that I perceive in reality nothing more than my own state of being, and not the object in itself. I neither see it, feel it, nor hear it ; but on the contrary, precisely there, where the object should be, all seeing, feeling, and so forth, comes to an end. Sensations, as affections of myself, are simple and have no extension ; they are not contiguous to one another in space, but successive to one another in time. I do, however, conceive them as contiguous in space, and it appears to me that it may be exactly at this point, this extension, and this changing of what is only a perception in myself, to something perceptible without me, that a consciousness of the object arises within me.

*Spirit.* This conjecture may be verified ; but could we raise it immediately to a conviction, we should yet attain to no clear insight, for the higher question would remain to be an-

swered—Why dost thou extend thy sensation through a space? Let us then immediately state this question. I have my reasons for this, in the following more general manner. How does it happen that from thy consciousness, which is nothing more than consciousness of thine own state, thou proceedest beyond thyself, in order to add to the perception of which thou art conscious, a something, perceptible, of which thou art not conscious?

## CHAPTER VI.

### KNOWLEDGE.

*I.* SWEET or bitter, rough or smooth, cold or warm, an agreeable or disagreeable smell, signifies nothing more than what awakens in me this or that sensation ; and the case is the same with respect to sounds. A relation to myself is always indicated, and it never occurs to me that the sweet or bitter taste, the pleasant or unpleasant smell, lies in the thing itself. It lies in me, and is only excited by the presence of the object. It appears indeed as if the case might be different, with the affection of the sight, such as colours, which might not be pure sensations, but something intermediate ; yet when we think well of it, red, blue, and so on, mean nothing more than what produces a certain sensation of sight. This leads me to conjecture how I may attain to a knowledge of things out of myself. I am affected in a certain manner—this I know absolutely ; and my affection must have a cause, which does not exist in me, and must consequently exist out of me. I reason thus instantaneously and involuntarily, and assume the existence of such a cause in the object. This cause must necessarily be one from which my sensation can be explained ; I am affected in a certain manner which I call a sweet taste, and the object must therefore be of a kind to awaken a sweet taste, or by a more rapid form of speech must be *sweet*, and in this manner I determine the object.

*Spirit.* There is some truth in this, although it is not the whole truth. What this is may perhaps appear in due time. Since however in other cases as well as this, thou wilt return

incontestably to this idea of a cause, we will endeavour to render perfectly clear what is really meant by it. We will admit that the assertion is perfectly correct, that by an involuntary course of reasoning, from the effect to the cause, thou hast first attained to a knowledge of the object ;—what then was it of which thou wert conscious in perception ?

*I.* Of being affected in a certain manner.

*Spirit.* But of an object, affecting thee in a certain manner, thou wast not conscious in perception ?

*I.* By no means. I have already admitted this.

*Spirit.* By this idea of causality therefore thou art enabled to add to a knowledge which thou hast, another which thou hast not ?

*I.* The expression is strange !

*Spirit.* Perhaps I may succeed in rendering it less so : let my expressions however appear to thee as they may, they are intended merely to lead thee to produce in thine own mind the same train of thoughts that I have produced in mine. When thou hast mastered the idea, express it as thou wilt, and with as much variety as possible, and be sure that thou wilt always express it well. How and by what means dost thou know of this affection of thyself ?

*I.* I know not how to answer thee in words. Because my subjective consciousness, as far as I am an intelligent being, is inseparably united with this knowledge. Because I am no further conscious than as I am aware of these affections.

*Spirit.* Thou hast therefore an organ or faculty, that of consciousness, by which thou perceivest these affections ?

*I.* I have.

*Spirit.* But an organ or faculty by which thou perceivest the existence of the object in itself thou hast not ?

*I.* Since thou hast convinced me that I neither see nor feel the object itself, nor embrace it with any external organ, I find myself compelled to confess that I have not.

*Spirit.* Consider well of this admission. What is an external sense in general, and how can it be external, if it does

not take cognisance of the external object, but only of the affections or states of thine own being?

*I.* I do distinguish green, sweet, red, smooth, bitter, rough; the sound of a violin and of a trumpet. Among these sensations I discover in some a certain similarity, although in some other respects I perceive their difference; thus green and red, though different, are both sensations of sight; rough and smooth, of touch; sweet and bitter, of taste. Sight, taste, and so forth, are not in themselves sensations, for I never see or feel absolutely, but always, as thou hast already remarked, see red or green, taste sweet or bitter, &c. Sight and taste are only higher forms or classes to which I refer the immediate sensations. I see in them no external senses, for they take cognisance only of the modifications of the inward sense; of the affections of my being. How I come to regard them as external senses is the question—for I do not take back my assertion that I have no organ for the object itself.

*Spirit.* Thou speakest nevertheless of objects as if by some organ their existence were really known to thee?

*I.* I do so.

*Spirit.* And this, according to thy previous assumption, in consequence of a knowledge which thou really dost possess, and for which thou hast an organ, and for the sake of this knowledge?

*I.* It is so.

*Spirit.* Thy real knowledge, that of thy sensations or affections, is to thee like an imperfect knowledge, which requires to be completed by another. This other new kind of knowledge thou hast described to thyself, not as what thou hast, but as what thou shouldst have, if it were not that thou hast no organ by which to attain it. "I know nothing indeed," thou seemest to say, "of things existing out of myself, but they must nevertheless exist, if I could but find them." A relation is thus formed with them in thought, by means of a supposed faculty, which nevertheless thou dost not possess. Strictly speaking, thou hast no consciousness of things in

themselves, but only by means of the idea of causality, a consciousness of what should be a consciousness of things, but which does not really belong to thee. Thou wilt therefore admit, that to a knowledge which thou hast, thou hast added another which thou hast not?

*I.* I must allow this.

*Spirit.* We will call this second knowledge, obtained by means of another, a *mediate*, and the first an immediate knowledge. The latter presents itself to thee simultaneously with the consciousness of existence, the former is deduced from it.

*I.* It is not, however, successive to it in time, for I am conscious of the object at the same moment in which I am conscious of myself.

*Spirit.* I did not speak of a succession in time; my meaning was, that when thou couldst distinguish by reflection thy consciousness of thyself from that of the object, and inquire about their connection, thou wouldst discover that the former was the necessary condition of the latter, which depended wholly upon it.

*I.* If this be all, I have already admitted as much.

*Spirit.* The second consciousness, I repeat, is produced, engendered, by a real act of the mind. Or dost thou find it otherwise?

*I.* I do, indeed, add to the consciousness of sensation, which is simultaneous with that of existence, another which I do not find in myself; and as by this I double and complete my real consciousness, I may be said to perform a mental act. I am, however, tempted either to take back my admission or the whole supposition. I am perfectly conscious of performing a mental act, when I form a universal conception, when in doubtful cases I choose one of various possible modes of action which lie before me. Of the mental act, however, which, according to thy assertion, I perform in the representation of an object out of myself, I am not conscious at all.

*Spirit.* Do not be deceived. Of these acts of the mind thou art only conscious by proceeding through previous states

of irresolution and indetermination, to which these acts put an end. In the case I have supposed, there is no previous indecision; the mind has no need of deliberation concerning the object producing a definite sensation. An act of the mind of which we are conscious, as such, is called *freedom*. An act without consciousness of action is called *spontaneity*. I by no means assume as necessary any immediate consciousness of the act, but merely, that on subsequent reflection thou shouldst perceive it to be an act. The higher question of what it is that prevents any such state of indecision, or any consciousness of the act, we may perhaps subsequently be able to solve. This act of the mind is called thought; (a word which I also shall employ;) and it is said that thought is a spontaneous act, to distinguish it from sensation, in which the mind is merely receptive and passive. How then does it happen that to the sensation which thou certainly hast, thou addest in thy thought an object of which thou knowest nothing?

*I.* I assume as certain that my sensation must have a cause.

*Spirit.* Wilt thou then not explain to me what is a cause?

*I.* I find a certain thing determined this way or that. I am not content with knowing that it is so, I assume that it has become so, and that, not by and through itself only, but by means of a power out of itself. This foreign power, that made it what it is, contains then its cause. That my sensation must have a cause, means merely that it must be produced in me by a force out of myself.

*Spirit.* This force or cause, thou addest in thought to the sensation of which thou art immediately conscious, and thus arises in thee the conception of an object. Let it be so: but now take notice; if thy sensation must have a cause, I admit the correctness of the inference; and I see with what perfect right is assumed the existence of things out of thyself, of which thou knowest nothing. But how then dost thou know, and how can it be proved, that thy sensation must have a cause? Or in the more general manner in which thou



hast stated the proposition, why canst thou not be satisfied to know that something *is*? Why must thou assume that it has become so, or that it has become so by means of an extraneous force?

*I.* I cannot avoid thinking thus. It seems as if I knew this immediately.

*Spirit.* What this answer, "thou knowest it immediately," may signify, we shall see if we are brought back to it as to the only possible one. We will however first try all other methods of obtaining, by reasoning, the grounds of the assertion that everything must have a cause. Dost thou know this by immediate perception?

*I.* How could I? since in perception there is nothing more than a consciousness that in me something *is*, by no means however that it has become so; far less that it has become so by an extraneous force lying beyond the limits of perception.

*Spirit.* Or is this idea obtained by generalising thy observation of things, out of thyself, whose cause thou hast invariably discovered to lie out of themselves, and applying this observation subsequently to thyself and the various states of thine own being?

*I.* Do not treat me like a child, and ascribe to me evident absurdities. By the idea of cause I first arrive at a knowledge of the existence of things out of myself; how then can I by observation of these things obtain the idea of a cause. Shall the earth rest on the great elephant, and the great elephant again upon the earth?

*Spirit.* Is then this idea deduced from another general truth?

*I.* Which again could be found neither in immediate perception, nor in the observation of external things, and concerning the origin of which thou wouldst start further questions! I might say I obtained this fundamental truth by immediate knowledge. It is better that I should say this at once of the idea of causality.

*Spirit.* Let it be so; we should then obtain besides the

first immediate knowledge by sensation, another immediate knowledge concerning a general truth. This knowledge that thy sensation must have a cause, is entirely independent of the knowledge of things in themselves?

*I.* Certainly, for the latter is obtained only by means of it.

*Spirit.* And thou hast it absolutely in thyself?

*I.* Absolutely, for only by means of it can I proceed out of myself.

*Spirit.* Out of thyself therefore, and through thyself, thou prescribest laws to existences and their relations?

*I.* If I wish to speak accurately, I must say that I prescribe laws to the images of these existences and their relations, which are formed in my own mind.

*Spirit.* Be it so. Art thou then conscious of these laws in any other manner than by acting in accordance with them?

*I.* My consciousness of them begins with that of sensation. My representation of an object according to the law of causality, is simultaneous with the sensation. Both the consciousness of my own state and the representation of the object producing it, are inseparably united. No consciousness occurs between these two;—and it is impossible that I should be conscious of this law, previously to acting in accordance with it.

*Spirit.* Thou actest in accordance with this law therefore unconsciously, and instantaneously, yet but a short time since thou didst declare thyself conscious of it, and expressed it as a general proposition. How is this?

*I.* Doubtless thus. I observe my own mind subsequently to having thus acted, and comprehend these observations in one general proposition.

*Spirit.* Thou canst therefore become conscious of these acts?

*I.* Most certainly I can, and I divine thy intention in asking this question. This is the above-mentioned second kind of immediate consciousness, that of my actions, as the first is that of my sensation or passive states.

*Spirit.* Right! Thou canst become conscious of thine

own act subsequently, by free observation of thyself and by reflection. Thou art not, however, immediately conscious of it in acting?

*I.* I must be so, for I am conscious of my representation of the object at the same moment as of the sensation. I have discovered the solution; I am immediately conscious of my act, only not as such, for it presents itself to me as a consciousness of the object. Subsequently by free reflection I become conscious of this as of the act of my own mind. My immediate consciousness is twofold, consisting of a consciousness of a state of suffering, which is sensation, and of action in the representation of an object according to the law of causality, the latter consciousness being immediately connected with the former.

My consciousness of the object is only a yet unrecognised *consciousness of my production of the representation of an object*. Of this production I know no more than that it is I who produce, and thus is all consciousness no more than a consciousness of myself, and so far perfectly comprehensible. Am I in the right?

*Spirit.* Perfectly so; but whence then is derived the necessity and universality thou hast ascribed to these propositions, to that of causality for instance?

*I.* From the immediate feeling that I cannot act otherwise as long as I have reason, and that no other reasonable being can act otherwise. When I say that all that is contingent, such as my sensation, must have a cause, I mean that a cause always was, is, and will be conceived by me, and by every thinking being in a similar case.

*Spirit.* It appears then that all thy knowledge is merely a knowledge of thyself, that thy consciousness never proceeds beyond thyself, and that what thou hast regarded as a consciousness of the real existence of the object is no more than a consciousness of thine own representation or conception of an object, produced according to an inward law of thought, and necessarily co-existing with thy sensation.

## CHAPTER VII.

### KNOWLEDGE.

*I.* Go on boldly. I have not only not interrupted thee, but have even assisted in the development of these inferences. Now however I find it, in earnest, necessary to retract my position, that by means of the law of causality I attained the knowledge of the existence of external things. I could by this means become conscious only of a *force* out of myself, in the same manner as for the explanation of magnetic phenomena, I suppose a magnetic—or for the explanation of electrical phenomena, an electrical—force in Nature.

The world without me appears by no means as a mere force. It is something extended, solid, sensible—not like a mere force with its various manifestations. It does not merely produce effects—it has properties. In the apprehension of it I am inwardly conscious of something quite different from mere thought. This appears to me as perception, although it has been proved that it cannot be such, and it will be difficult for me to describe the kind of consciousness that I seem to have of it, and to separate it from those other kinds of which we have spoken.

*Spirit.* Thou must nevertheless make the attempt, or we shall not come to a clear understanding.

*I.* I will endeavour to open a way towards it. I beseech thee, if thy organs of sight resemble mine, to fix thine eye on yonder object, and, forgetting thy previous reasoning, to tell me candidly what is the impression produced in thee. Dost thou not look over, and perceive at a single glance, a *surface*,

and hast thou the most distant or obscure conception of that operation of extending a red point to a line, and a line to a surface of which thou hast spoken? It is an afterthought to divide this surface into lines and points. Would not every unprejudiced observer say and insist that he really saw a surface? I say "*saw*."

*Spirit*. I am ready to concede all, and find that my self-observation corresponds exactly with thine. Thou must not however forget that it is not our design to relate to one another whatever takes place in consciousness, as in a journal of the human mind, but to consider its various phænomena in their connection, and to explain and deduce one from another; and that consequently no one of thine observations, which cannot certainly be denied, but which we would fain have explained, can overturn any one of my correct inferences. Do not therefore, in considering the resemblance of this kind of consciousness of bodies out of thyself, to real perception, overlook the great difference which nevertheless exists between them.

*I*. I was about to remark on this difference. Each indeed appears as an immediate, and not as an acquired consciousness; but sensation is consciousness of my own state. The consciousness of the object appears to have no relation to myself. I know that it *is*, and that is all; it does not concern me further. If in the first instance I seem like soft clay, on which now this, now that impression is made, in the other I am like a mirror over which the forms of objects pass, without occasioning the slightest change in it. This difference however is in favour of my argument. I seem to have a real independent consciousness of external existences entirely different from sensation or a consciousness of the various states of my own being.

*Spirit*. This is well observed, but be not too hasty. If we have been correct in our former conclusion, that thou canst have immediate consciousness only of thyself; if the consciousness now in question is neither of action nor of suffering,

may it not be a hitherto unrecognised consciousness of thine own existence? Of thy existence inasmuch as thou art a knowing, or intelligent being?

*I.* I do not understand thee; but help me, for I wish to do so.

*Spirit.* I must then claim thy whole attention, for I am obliged to go deeper than we have hitherto gone into this matter, and to seek far, for the answer to thy question. What art thou?

*I.* To answer this question in the most general manner I must say I am I, myself.

*Spirit.* I am content with the answer. What is involved in this idea of *I*, and how dost thou attain it?

*I.* I can only make myself understood by opposition. An external existence—a *thing*, is something out of me, the intelligent being cognizant of it. Concerning it there arises the question—since the thing cannot know of itself, how can a knowledge of it arise? And, since all its modifications lie in the circle of its own existence, and by no means in mine, how can a consciousness of it arise in me? How does the thing affect me? What is the tie between me, the subject, and the thing which is the object of my knowledge? Of what I am, I know no more than that I am, but here no tie is necessary between subject and object. My own being is this tie, I am at once the subject knowing, and the object known of; and this reflection or return of the knowledge on itself is what I designate by the term *I*, if I have any determinate meaning.

*Spirit.* Therefore it is in the identity of both subject and object, that thine existence as an intelligent being consists?

*I.* It is so.

*Spirit.* Canst thou then comprehend this identity, which is neither subject nor object, but lies at the foundation of both?

*I.* By no means. It is the condition of all my knowledge, that the conscious being, and what he is conscious of, appear as separate. I cannot even conceive any other kind of con-

sciousness. In recognising my own existence, I see myself as subject and object, which however are immediately connected.

*Spirit.* Canst thou be conscious of the moment in which this incomprehensible one divided itself thus?

*I.* How can I? since my consciousness only becomes possible by means of this separation—since it is my consciousness itself that thus separates.

*Spirit.* Of this separation, then, thou becomest immediately conscious, in becoming conscious of thyself? This, then, should be thine actual original existence?

*I.* So it is.

*Spirit.* And on what then is this separation based?

*I.* I am an intelligence, and have consciousness in myself. This separation is the condition and result of this consciousness. It has its basis, therefore, in myself.

*Spirit.* Thou art an intelligence, and as such thou art to thyself an object of knowledge. Thine objective knowledge presents itself therefore to thy subjective knowledge, and hovers before it, although without any consciousness on thy part of such a presentation. Is this what thou wouldst say? or canst thou bring forward some more exact characteristics of subject and object as they appear in consciousness?

*I.* The subjective contains within itself the basis of consciousness according to its form, but by no means according to its matter. That a consciousness, an inward power of conception and contemplation, should exist, depends on the subject; but that this or that is conceived or contemplated, depends on the object. The objective contains the basis of its existence within itself; the subjective appears as the still and passive mirror, before which the objective floats. That the first should reflect images, belongs to its own nature; that this or that is reflected, depends on the object.

*Spirit.* The subjective, then, is precisely so constituted as thou hast described the consciousness of objects out of thyself to be?

*I.* It is so, and this agreement is very remarkable. I

begin half to believe that out of the internal laws of my own consciousness may proceed even the conception of an existence out of myself, and independent of any act of mine; and the basis of this conception may be nothing more than these laws themselves.

*Spirit.* And why only *half* believe?

*I.* Because I do not yet see why it should produce precisely this conception of a solid extended mass occupying a certain portion of space.

*Spirit.* Thou hast nevertheless seen above that it is no more than thine own sensation which thou extendest through space, and thou hast imagined the possibility that it may be exactly by this extension in space that it becomes transformed to thee into something sensible. For the present we have only to explain the manner in which this conception of space arises. Let us then make the attempt. I know that thou canst not become conscious of thy intelligent activity as such until it passes through some change of state. If thou shouldst attempt to represent it to thyself, whilst performing this function,—passing from one state to another,—how would it appear to thee?

*I.* My spiritual faculty appears as if moving from one point to another—as if drawing a line. A positive thought makes a point in this line.

*Spirit.* And why as if drawing a line?

*I.* I cannot answer this, or state the cause of it, without passing the limits of my own existence. I can say only it *is* so.

*Spirit.* Thus, then, appears to thee a particular act of thy consciousness. How then appears, not thy self-produced, but thy inherited or acquired knowledge, from which all particular thought is only the renewal or further modification? Under what image does this appear?

*I.* Evidently as something in which one can draw lines and make points in all directions, namely, as space.

*Spirit.* Now then it will be clear to thee, that what pro-



ceeds from thine own mind may nevertheless appear to thee as an existence out of thyself ; nay, must necessarily appear so. Thou hast penetrated to the true source of thy conceptions of things out of thyself. This is not perception, for thou perceivest only thine own state. It is not thought, for things do not appear to thee as the product of thought. It is, really and in fact, an absolute and immediate consciousness of an existence out of thyself, just as perception is an immediate consciousness of thine own state. Do not be deceived by sophists and half philosophers ; things do not appear to thee by means of any representatives. Of the thing that exists, and that can exist, thou art conscious immediately ; thou, thyself, art that of which thou art conscious. By a fundamental law of thy being thou art thus presented to thyself, and thrown out of thyself. In all consciousness I contemplate myself, and the objective, that which is contemplated, is also myself,—the same I which contemplates, presented objectively. I see—and am the conscious being—see my own visual sensation, and am also that of which I am conscious. For this reason is the object transparent to thy mind's eye, because it is thy mind itself. I divide, limit, determine the possible forms of things, and the relations of these forms previous to all perception ; and no wonder—for I divide, limit, and determine only my own knowledge. Thus does a knowledge of things become possible. It is not in them, and cannot proceed out of them ; it proceeds from thee, and from a law of thine own nature.

There is no external sense, for there is no external perception. There is, however, an external contemplation—not of the object—but of a knowledge not subjective—but presented to, hovering before, the subject. Through the means of this external contemplation are perception and sense regarded as external. I see or feel a surface—but I contemplate my sight or vision of a surface. Space—penetrable, transparent, illuminated, the purest image of my knowledge, is not seen, but contemplated in the mind, and in it is my own vision

contemplated. The light is not out of, but in me, and I am the light. Thou hast formerly replied to my question, "How dost thou know that thou seest and hearest?" by saying that thou hast an immediate knowledge or consciousness of these sensations. Now, perhaps, thou wilt be better able to explain this immediate consciousness of sensation.

I. It must be a two-fold consciousness. Sensation is itself an immediate consciousness, for I am sensible of my own sensation; but from this arises no knowledge of external existence, for I am sensible only of my own state. I am however, originally, not merely a sensitive, but also a contemplative being; not merely an active, but also an intelligent one. I contemplate my sensation, and there arises from myself and my own nature, a knowledge, a *cognition of an existence*. Sensation becomes transformed into a capability of sensation; the various affections of my senses, as red, smooth, and so forth, into a *something* red, and smooth, out of myself, whose existence I contemplate as in space, because the contemplation itself is space. Thus does it become clear why I believe I see or feel surfaces, which, in fact, I neither see nor feel; but I contemplate my own sensation of sight or touch as that of a surface.

*Spirit.* Thou hast well understood me, or rather thyself.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### KNOWLEDGE.

*I.* It is then not at all by means of an inference drawn, consciously or unconsciously, from the law of causality, that the object appears to me; it is immediately presented to my consciousness without any process of reasoning. I cannot, as I have just done, say that perception becomes transformed into a something perceivable, for this is the first in consciousness. It is not of an affection of my own sight or touch, which I call red, smooth, and so on, but of a red, smooth object I am conscious.

*Spirit.* If, however, thou shouldst be obliged to explain what is red, smooth, and the like, thou couldst not possibly make any other reply than that it was that by which thou wert affected in a certain manner?

*I.* Certainly, if you ask me this question, and I make an attempt to explain it. In fact, however, neither I nor any one else asks this question. I forget myself entirely, and lose myself in contemplation of the object. I am not conscious of my own state at all, but only of an existence out of myself. Red and green are properties or attributes of a thing, and that is all. The matter can be no further explained, any more than, according to what we have agreed on, my affection can be further explained. This is most evident in the affections of sight. Colour appears as something out of myself, and it would never occur to a man of unsophisticated understanding to explain it as that which caused a certain affection or state of being in himself.

*Spirit.* Assuredly, however, he would do so if we asked what he meant by sweet or sour. We will not now stop to inquire whether the sensation of sight is more than pure sensation; whether it may not be a something intermediate, between sensation and contemplation, and their connecting link in our minds. I admit the assertion, and it is extremely welcome to me. You can, indeed, lose yourself in contemplation of the object, and without directing particular attention to yourself, or without interest for any particular external action; you do so naturally and unavoidably. This is the remark to which the defenders of a vain consciousness of external things have recourse, when it is shown that the law of causality, by which their existence might be inferred, exists only in ourselves. They deny then that any such inference is made, and, inasmuch as they refer to real consciousness in certain cases, this cannot be disputed. These same defenders, when the nature of contemplation from the laws of intelligence itself is explained to them, draw themselves this inference, and are never weary of repeating that there must be something external to us which compels us to make this inference.

*I.* Let us not concern ourselves about them at present, I have no preconceived opinion, and seek only for truth.

*Spirit.* Contemplation necessarily proceeds from the perception of thine own state, although there may not be at every moment a clear consciousness of such a perception. Even in that consciousness in which thou lovest thyself entirely in the object, there is still something which is only possible from a close observation of thine own state.

*I.* That is to say, that at all times the consciousness of existence out of myself is accompanied by an unobserved consciousness of my own state of being—the first dependent on the latter. Is it not so?

*Spirit.* This is my meaning.

*I.* Prove this to me, and I shall be satisfied.

*Spirit.* Dost thou regard objects as placed generally in space, or as each occupying a certain portion of space?

*I.* The latter—for every object has its determinate size.

*Spirit.* And do various objects fall in the same part of space ?

*I.* By no means. They exclude each other. They are over or under, behind or before, one another. Nearer to me, or further from me.

*Spirit.* And how dost thou come to this measurement and arrangement of space ? Is it by sensation ?

*I.* How can it be, since space itself is no sensation ?

*Spirit.* Or is it by contemplation ?

*I.* This cannot be, for contemplation is immediate and infallible. What is contemplated does not appear as brought forth and cannot deceive. But I undertake to estimate the size and distances of objects, and their positions with respect to others ; and it is known to every tyro that we first see all objects in the same line, and learn to calculate their greater or lesser distances. An infant stretches out its hand towards distant objects as if they lay immediately before him, and one born blind who should suddenly receive sight would do the same.

This representation of distances is therefore a judgment formed by means of the understanding. I may err in my estimation, and what are called optical deceptions are not deceptions of sight, but erroneous judgments formed concerning the size of objects and the various relations between them, and consequently concerning their true figure and distance. The object is really as I behold it in space, and the colour which I observe is likewise real—in this there is no deception.

*Spirit.* And what is then the principle of this judgment—to take the easiest case—how do you judge of the distances of objects ?

*I.* Doubtless by the greater strength or feebleness of impressions otherwise similar. I see before me two objects of the same red colour ; the one whose colour appears the fainter, I regard as the more distant, and as much more distant as it is fainter.

*Spirit.* Therefore it is according to the degree of strength in the impression. And how then do you estimate this degree of strength?

*I.* Obviously, by my observation of the manner in which I am affected, and, moreover, by very slight differences in the mode of my affection.

Thou hast conquered! All consciousness of objects out of myself is determined by a clear and exact consciousness of my own state, and I reason from the effect produced in me to the cause of this effect out of myself.

*Spirit.* Thou hast yielded so quickly, that I must now carry on the argument against myself in thy name. My proof can hold no further than for those cases in which an actual consideration and estimate of the size, distance, and position of objects takes place. In most instances, however, a judgment is formed of the size and distance of an object at the very moment in which it is perceived.

*I.* When we have once learned to estimate distances by the strength of the impression, the rapidity of the judgment is merely the consequence of its frequent exercise. I have learnt by a lifelong experience to calculate distance by this means, and the representation that I now make of them is combined of sensation, contemplation, and former judgments, of the last of which only I am conscious. I do not any longer see a red or a green out of myself, but a red and a green at *different distances*; and this last addition is merely a renewal of a judgment formerly attained by a reasoning process.

*Spirit.* Is it not then now become clear, whether the existence of objects out of thyself is discovered by reasoning, or intuitively contemplated, or obtained by a combination of both?

*I.* Perfectly; and I believe that I have now obtained the fullest insight into the origin of the representation of objects out of myself. First, then, I am, simply because I am conscious that I am, conscious of my existence as an intelligent, practical being.

The first consciousness is sensation, the second contemplation—unlimited space.

What is unlimited I cannot comprehend, for I am finite. I limit, therefore, by my thought a certain portion of the universal space, and place the former in a certain relation to the latter.

Thirdly, My own sensation forms the scale by which I measure this limited portion of space. What affects me in such or such a manner, stands in such or such a relation to other things affecting me. The properties or attributes of the object proceed from the consciousness of my own sensations, the space which it fills from intuitive contemplation. By a process of thought, both are united in one, and by the act of my own mind, by which it is viewed as in space, that which was merely a state or affection of my own being becomes an attribute of the object. It is, however, placed in space, not by intuitive contemplation, but by thought, by the measuring and regulating power of thought. Not that this act is to be regarded as a creation by thought, but merely a limitation of a given product of contemplation and sensation.

*Spirit.* What affects me in such or such a manner is to be placed in such or such a relation. This is the process followed in arranging and measuring objects in space. But in declaring that it affects thee in a certain manner, do we not assume that it affects thee generally?

*I.* Doubtless we do.

*Spirit.* And is any representation of an external object possible, which is not in this manner limited and defined in space?

*I.* No; for an object is not generally in space, but each one in a limited portion of space.

*Spirit.* Therefore in fact, whether consciously or not, every external object is represented by thee as affecting thyself, as certainly as it is represented as filling a certain portion of space?

*I.* That follows, certainly.

*Spirit.* And what kind of representation is that of an object affecting thyself?

*I.* Evidently an act of thought; and of thought according to the law of causality above mentioned. I see now still more clearly that the consciousness of an object is doubly united to my self-consciousness, by intuitive contemplation, and by thought according to the law of causality.

*Spirit.* It must then be possible for thee to become conscious of this act of thought?

*I.* Doubtless it must; although usually I am not so.

*Spirit.* To this passive state, this affection of thyself therefore, thou must add the supposition of an activity out of thyself, such as thou hast before described in reference to the law of causality?

*I.* I must.

*Spirit.* And with the same validity, and the same signification as before. Thou canst not think otherwise, and canst know nothing more than that thou dost think so?

*I.* Nothing more. This we have already seen.

*Spirit.* In so much then the object is the product of thy thought?

*I.* Certainly, for this follows from the former premises.

*Spirit.* And what then is this object discovered by the idea of causality?

*I.* A *force* existing out of myself.

*Spirit.* Which is neither discovered by the sensation nor by contemplation?

*I.* No; I am always perfectly conscious that I do not perceive it immediately, but only by means of its manifestations; although I ascribe to it an existence independent of my own. I am affected, and I infer that there must be something that affects me.

*Spirit.* The object intuitively contemplated, therefore, is very different from the object of the understanding. The one appears before thee extended in space; the other, the inward force, is discovered only by a process of reasoning.



*I.* I place this force also in space, and connect it with the extended mass which I contemplate.

*Spirit.* And what then is, according to thy view, the relation subsisting between it and the mass?

*I.* The mass, with its properties, is itself the effect and manifestation of the inward force. This force has a twofold operation; one by which it maintains itself, in a certain definite form; another, by which it appears and affects me in a certain manner.

*Spirit.* Thou hast formerly sought for a supporter of attributes, other than the space containing them; a something permanent amidst the vicissitudes of perpetual change?

*I.* I have, and this something permanent is found. It is this force itself, which endures for ever, assuming and supporting all change.

*Spirit.* Let us now cast a glance back on what we have established. Thou findest thyself in a certain state, affected in a certain manner, which thou callest red, smooth, sweet, and so on. Dost thou know more in this case, than simply that thou art thus affected, that such a sensation exists?

*I.* I do not.

*Spirit.* Further, by a law of thy nature as an intelligence, a space is conceived by thee; or dost thou know more than this concerning this matter?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Between this state or sensation of which thou art conscious, and that conception of space, there is not the smallest connection except that which exists in thy consciousness itself. Or dost thou perceive any other?

*I.* I see none.

*Spirit.* Thou art, however, a reasoning as well as a contemplative, and a sensitive being. Thou dost not merely feel thy state or sensation, it is also present to thy thought, and thou findest thyself compelled to assume a cause existing out of thyself, a foreign force. Dost thou know more of this than that such an inference is unavoidable?

*I.* I can know no more than that I am compelled to think this by an inevitable law of my own thought.

*Spirit.* Through this thy thought, first arises a connection, between the sensation which thou feelest, and the space intuitively contemplated by thee. Thou referrest to the latter the cause of the former. Or is it not so?

*I.* It is so. Thou hast clearly proved that I effect this connection by the process of my own thought, and that it is neither felt nor contemplated. Of any connection beyond the limits of my consciousness I cannot speak. I cannot proceed a hair's breadth further, any more than I can spring out of myself. To attempt to represent a connection between things *in themselves*, with the *I* in itself, is to ignore the nature of thought, or to speak of that as thought, which no one can ever think.

*Spirit.* From thee then I need fear no contradiction when I say, that our consciousness of external existence is absolutely nothing but the product of our own faculty of presentation, and that we know nothing more of external objects than that we have a certain determinate consciousness of them subject to certain laws.

*I.* I cannot deny this. It is so.

*Spirit.* Canst thou aught object to the bolder statement of the same proposition; that in that which we call intuitive knowledge or contemplation of the external world, we contemplate only ourselves, and that our consciousness is and can be only a consciousness of the modifications of our own existence?

I say also thou wilt not be able to advance aught against the assertion, that if the external world generally arises for us only through our own consciousness, what is individual and particular in this external world can arise in no other manner; and if the connection between what is external to us and ourselves is merely a connection in our own thought, then is the connection of the manifold objects of the external world, this and no other. As clearly as I have shown thee

the origin of this general presentation of objects beyond thyself could I also show how there arises an infinite multiplicity of objects, mutually related, determining each other with rigid necessity, and forming a complete system, such as thou thyself hast well described. I spare myself this task however, since I find that thou hast already arrived at the result for the sake of which alone I should have undertaken it.

I. I see this result, and must submit to it.

*Spirit.* And with this insight, mortal, be for ever free from the fear which has been to thee a source of torment and humiliation ! Tremble no longer at a necessity which exists only in thine own thought ! fear no longer to be overwhelmed by things which are the product of thine own mind, to find thyself the thinking being placed in one class, with what is brought forth by thine own thoughts. As long as thou couldst believe that a system of things such as thou hast described, really existed out of and independently of thyself, and that thou wert but a link in this great chain, such a fear might be well grounded. Now that thou hast seen that all this exists but in thee and through thee, thou wilt doubtless no longer fear that which is but the creature of thine own mind. From this fear I wished to free thee, and I leave thee now to thyself.

## CHAPTER IX.

### KNOWLEDGE.

*I.* STAY, false Spirit: is this the wisdom thou hast promised me? Thou first freed me indeed from all dependence by transforming me and all that surrounds me into a phantom, into nothing. Thou hast loosened the bonds of necessity by annihilating all existence.

*Spirit.* Is the danger so great?

*I.* And thou canst jest! According to thy system.

*Spirit.* My system! We have toiled together in its erection. Thou hast seen all as clearly as myself. It would be hard for thee at present to enter fully into my system of thought.

*I.* Call it by what name thou wilt, our inquiries have ended in blank nothingness. Presentation, modification of consciousness! Mere consciousness is but an image, a shade without reality: in itself it cannot satisfy me, and has not the smallest worth. I might endure to see this material world without me vanish into a mere picture, and be dissolved into a shadow; but my own personal existence vanishes with it. It becomes a mere series of sensations and thoughts without end or aim. Is it not so?

*Spirit.* I say nothing in my own name. Examine—investigate—help thyself.

*I.* I appear to myself as a body existing in space, with organs of sense, capacities of action, a physical force governed by a will. Thou wilt say, as thou hast before said, of objects out of myself, that it is a combined product of sensation, thought and intuitive contemplation. As I have been com-

pelled to admit that what I call red, sweet, hard, and so on, is nothing more than an affection of my own organs, and that only by contemplation and thought it is placed in space, and regarded as a property of a thing existing independently of me, so shall I also be compelled to admit that this corporeal frame, with its organs of sense, is but a sensualization of my inward thinking self; that I, the spiritual pure intelligence, and I, the corporeal frame in the corporeal world, are one and the same, merely viewed from different points, conceived by two different faculties—that of pure thought, and external contemplation.

*Spirit.* This will certainly be the result of any inquiry that may be instituted.

*I.* And this thinking, willing, intelligent being, however thou mayst name it, possessed of these faculties of thought, volition, and so forth, in whom these faculties rest,—how shall I have attained a knowledge of it? Is it by immediate consciousness? This cannot be; for I am conscious only of special acts of thought, volition, &c., but not of the capacities through which they are performed, far less of a being in whom these capacities rest. I contemplate the specific thought which occupies the present or the succeeding moment, and there this intellectual contemplation ceases. This inward contemplation again becomes an object of thought; but according to the laws by which this thought acts, it is but a half and imperfect thought, as the thought of my state during sensation was only a half thought. As formerly to the passive receptivity I added in thought an active power, so here to the determinate thought or will of any specific moment, I add a determinable,—an infinite, manifold possible thought or will. This manifold possibility of thought I conceive as one definite whole, and thus arises the idea of a finite power of thought, a something different from the thought itself, a being or essence possessing this power. But on higher principles, it is conceivable that this thinking essence may be produced

by thought itself. Thought in general is creative ; intuitive contemplation gives the naked fact, and nothing more. Thought explains this fact, and unites it to another, not found in intuition, but produced purely by thought itself. I am conscious of a certain thought ; thus far, and no farther, does intuitive consciousness proceed. I think this thought, that is, I call it forth from an indeterminate possibility to determinate existence ; and thus do I with every determinate act or thought of which I am conscious, and thus arise for me those series of powers or capacities, and of beings possessing them, which I assume.

*Spirit.* Even with respect to thyself, therefore, thou art only conscious of this or that determinate state of sensation, contemplation, or thought ?

*I.* That *I* feel, *I* contemplate, *I* think ? as the real foundation of the thought, contemplation, or sensation ? By no means ! Not even so much as this have thy principles left me.

*Spirit.* Very possibly.

*I.* Nay, of necessity. All that I know is my consciousness. All consciousness is either immediate or mediate. The first is self-consciousness ; the second, consciousness of that which is not myself. What I call *I*, is therefore absolutely nothing but a certain modification of consciousness, immediate, and returning into itself, instead of being directed outward. Since this is the necessary condition of all consciousness, it must, whether perceptibly or not, accompany all other, and therefore do I refer all thought to this *I* and not to the thing thought of out of me. Otherwise the *I* would at every moment vanish, and for every new conception a new *I* would arise, and I would never mean anything more than *not the thing*.

This scattered self-consciousness is united by thought itself, into the unity of the supposed capacity or power of thought. According to this supposition, all conceptions of which I am immediately conscious, proceed from one and the same power,

which rests in one and the same being, and thus arises for me the idea of personal identity and of the real and effective power of this personality—necessarily a mere fiction, since the personality itself is a fiction.

*Spirit.* Thou reasonest correctly.

*I.* And thou canst find satisfaction in this! How can I truly say *I* feel, *I* think, *I* contemplate? It would be more correct to say, “it is felt,” “it is thought,” and so on; nay, if still more cautious, it would be better to say, “the thought appears,” so much only is truly known—the rest is merely a supposition—a fiction.

*Spirit.* It is well expressed.

*I.* There is nothing enduring, permanent, either in me or out of me, nothing but everlasting change. I know of no existence, not even of my own. I know nothing and am nothing. Images—pictures—only are, pictures which wander by without anything existing past which they wander, without any corresponding reality which they might represent, without significance and without aim. I myself am one of these images, or rather a confused image of these images. All reality is transformed into a strange dream, without a world of which the dream might be, or a mind that might dream it. Contemplation is a dream; thought, the source of all existence and of all that I fancied reality, of my own existence, my own capacities, is a dream of that dream.

*Spirit.* Thou hast well understood all. Use the sharpest words thou canst find to make this result hateful, it is nevertheless unavoidable, unless thou wilt, perhaps retract, the admission thou hast made?

*I.* By no means. I have seen, and now see clearly, that it is so, yet I cannot believe it.

*Spirit.* Thou seest it clearly, yet cannot believe it? That is strange!

*I.* Ruthless, mocking spirit! I owe thee no thanks for having guided me on this path!

*Spirit.* Shortsighted mortal ! Thus is it ever with thy race. Didst thou suppose that these results were less evident to me than to thyself, and that I did not beforehand clearly see, how by these principles all reality was annihilated, all existence transformed into a dream ? Didst thou take me for an admirer of this system, or suppose that I regarded it as a complete system of the human mind ?

Thou hast sought to *know*, and thou hast chosen a wrong path. Thou hast sought knowledge where no knowledge can reach, and hadst persuaded thyself that thou hadst obtained an insight into that which by its very nature cannot admit of it. I found thee in this state of mind, I wished to free thee from thy false knowledge, but by no means to bring thee the true.

Thou wouldst know thine own knowledge. Is it wonderful that in this attempt thou hast discovered nothing more ? What is discovered by and through knowledge, is nothing more than knowledge. All knowledge consists of representations, images, and thou hast asked for some correlative to these images. This demand cannot be satisfied by knowledge ; a system of mere knowledge, is a system of mere pictures, without reality, significance or object.

The reality in which thou hast formerly believed, the sensuous material world of which thou hast feared to be the slave, has vanished, for the sensuous world arises to thee only through knowledge, and is itself thy knowledge. Thou hast seen the delusion, and without denying thy better insight, canst never again be deceived by it. This is the sole merit of the system at which we have toiled together ; it destroys and annihilates error. It can give no truth, for it is absolutely empty. Thou seekest, as I well know, something real and permanent lying beyond these mere appearances, a different kind of reality from that which has been even now annihilated. But in vain dost thou seek this through thy knowledge.



Hast thou no other organ by which to apprehend it? If not it will never be found by thee.

Thou hast however such an organ; let it be thy care to awaken and vivify it, and thou wilt attain the most perfect tranquillity. I leave thee now to thyself.

## CHAPTER X.

### FAITH.

TERRIBLE Spirit, thy words have crushed me. But thou hast referred me to myself, and what were I, could anything out of myself irrecoverably cast me down?

How is it that my heart revolts at a system against which my understanding can object nothing? It is that I require something beyond these mere images or mental conceptions, something that is and would be if the conception were not, and which the conception takes cognisance of, without in the smallest degree affecting. A mere conception is a delusion, and if my entire knowledge be nothing more, I am defrauded of my life. That nothing exists but ideas, conceptions, is, to the common sense of mankind, a laughable absurdity. To the more instructed judgment, aware of the deep, and, by *mere reasoning*, irrefragable grounds for such an assertion, it is an overwhelming, an annihilating thought.

And what is then this something lying beyond all conception, towards which I look with such ardent longing? What is the power which draws me towards it? What is the central point in my soul with which it is united?

Not merely to know, but according to thy knowledge to *do*, is the destiny of man. "Not for leisurely contemplation of thyself, not to brood over devout sensations, art thou here. Thine action, thine action alone, determines thy worth."

This voice, which sounds from the innermost recesses of my soul, leads me out of mere knowledge, to something lying beyond and entirely opposed to it; something which is higher

than all knowledge, and contains within itself the end and object of all knowledge.

If I shall act, I shall doubtless know that I act, and how I act ; but this knowledge will not be itself the act, but will merely behold it. This voice then announces to me what I sought, a something lying beyond knowledge, and in its nature entirely independent of it. Thus it is, I know this immediately, intuitively, but I have entered on the territories of speculation, and doubt once awakened will continue secretly to disturb me, unless I can justify my belief even before this tribunal. I must ask myself therefore, how is it thus ? Whence arises that voice in my soul which leads me beyond the boundaries of knowledge ?

There is in me an impulse to absolute independent self-activity. Nothing is more insupportable to me, than to be merely by another, for another, and through another.

I will be something by my own unaided effort. This impulse is inseparably united with my self-consciousness.

I endeavour to explain this feeling, to give sight to this blind impulse by thought. It urges me to independent action. Who am I ? Subject and object in one—contemplating and contemplated, thinking and thought of. As both must I have become what I am ; as both must I originate ideas, and produce a state or mode of being beyond them. I ascribe to myself as an intelligence the power of originating the idea of a purpose, and further of manifesting this idea in action ; a real effective productive power, which is something quite different from the capacity of ideal conception. Those ideas of purpose or design are not, like the ideas of knowledge, imitations or representations of something already given, but much rather types of something yet to be produced. The power or force which produces them lies beyond them, and only becomes manifest in them. Such an independent energy it is that in consequence of this impulse I ascribe to myself.

Here then, it appears, does the consciousness of all reality

begin; the real efficacy of my idea, and the real power of action which in consequence of it I am compelled to ascribe to myself, commences at this point. Let it be as it may with the reality of the sensual world, I have reality in myself.

I can make this active power the subject of thought, but I do not produce it from my thought. The immediate feeling of this impulse to activity lies at the foundation of my thought, and thought does no more than conceive this feeling according to its own laws.

Yet let me pause! Shall I wilfully and intentionally deceive myself? Can this be justified before the tribunal of speculation? I feel indeed an impulse towards external action, and since it is I who feel this impulse, and neither with my feeling nor my consciousness I can pass out of myself, it appears that the fundamental basis of this impulse is in myself, that it is a self-originated activity. Might it not be however that this impulse, although I cannot perceive it, is in reality the impulse of a to me invisible, foreign power? and the idea of my free activity, a delusion consequent on the narrowness of my sphere of vision? I have no reason to suppose this, but also no reason to deny it. I must acknowledge that I absolutely know nothing and can know nothing of it.

Do I then really feel within myself that power of free action, which, strangely enough, I ascribe to myself without knowing anything of it?

By no means; for it is merely that something determinable, which, according to the well-known laws of thought, is supposed as the source of all that is determinate.

Is that impulse towards the imagined realization of an idea anything more than the usual process in all objective thinking, which always seeks to appear something more than mere thinking? Why should it be more in this case than in the other? I feel this impulse I say, and think this since I say it. Do I then really feel it, or only think I feel it? Is not all that I call feeling really a presentation of objective thought? and the first transition point of all objectivity? And do I

then really think, or do I merely dream that I think? What can hinder the everlasting continuance of such questions? At what point can they be forced to stop? I must confess that at every step in the manifestations of consciousness it is possible to stop, and by reflection beget a new consciousness, and that thereby the first immediate consciousness is driven a step further back, and darkened and made doubtful, and that to this ladder there is no highest step. I know that the system which has so revolted me, as well as all scepticism, rests on the clear consciousness of this procedure. •

I know that according to this system I must refuse obedience to that voice which seems to speak from my soul. I cannot *will* to act, for according to that system I cannot *know* whether I do really act or not: that which seems my action, must as a mere picture, perhaps a delusive picture, be perfectly indifferent to me. All interest, all earnestness, is effaced from my life, and life and thought are transformed into a mere play, proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing.

Shall I then refuse obedience to that voice? I will not. I will freely yield myself to the destiny towards which this impulse points, and will find in this resolution the truth and reality of thought, as well as all other truth and reality which it supposes. I will keep within the limits of sound natural thought where this impulse has placed me, and renounce all those subtile investigations and refined sophistries which alone could make me doubt of its truth.

I understand thee now, sublime Spirit! I have found the organ by which to apprehend this reality, and probably all other. It is not knowledge, for knowledge can only demonstrate and establish itself; every knowledge supposes some higher knowledge on which it is founded, and of this ascent there is no end. It is Faith, that voluntary reposing on the views naturally presenting themselves to us, because through these views only we can fulfil our destiny; which approves of knowledge, and raises to certainty and conviction that which

without it might be mere delusion. It is no knowledge, but a resolution of the will to admit this knowledge. This is no mere verbal distinction, but a true and deep one, pregnant with the most important consequences for my whole character. Let me for ever hold fast by it. All my conviction is but faith, and it proceeds from the heart, and not from the understanding. Knowing this, I will enter into no dispute, for I foresee that in this way nothing can be gained. I will not suffer my conviction to be disturbed by it, for its source lies higher than all disputation ; I will not endeavour by reasoning to press my conviction on others, or will not be discouraged if such an undertaking should fail. I have adopted my mode of thinking for myself, and not for others, and to myself only need I justify it. Whoever has the same upright intention, will also attain the same or a similar conviction ; and without it, this is impossible. Now that I know this, I also know from what point all culture of myself and others must proceed ; from the will, and not from the understanding. Let the first only be firmly directed towards the good, the latter will of itself apprehend the true. Should the latter be exercised and developed whilst the first remains neglected, nothing can come of it but a facility in vain and endless sophistical refinements, into the absolute void inane. Now that I know this, I am able to confute all false knowledge that might raise itself against my faith, for I know that every seeming truth, born of thought alone, and not ultimately resting on faith, is false and spurious ; for knowledge, purely and simply such, when carried out to its utmost consequences, leads to the conviction that we can know nothing. Such knowledge never finds anything in the conclusions that it has not previously placed in the premises by faith, and even then its conclusions are not always correct. In this I possess the test of all truth and of all conviction ; truth originates in the conscience, and what contradicts its authority, or renders us unwilling or incapable of rendering obedience to this authority, is most certainly false, should I even be un-

able to discover the fallacies through which it is accomplished.

Thus also has it been with every human creature, who has been born into the world. Unconsciously they have all seized on the reality which exists for them only through faith, and this intuitive faith forces itself on them simultaneously with their existence. If in mere knowledge, in mere perception and thought, we can discover no ground for regarding our mental presentations as more than mere pictures, why do we all nevertheless regard them as more, and imagine for them a basis, a *substratum* independent of all their modifications? If we all possess the capacity and the instinct to go beyond this natural view of things, why do so few follow this instinct, exercise this capacity, nay, even resist, with a sort of bitterness, when one seeks to urge them towards this path? What holds them imprisoned in these natural boundaries? Not inferences of reason, for there are none which could do this. It is our deep interest in reality that does this; in the good that is to be produced, in the common and sensuous that is to be enjoyed. From this interest, this concern in reality, can no one who lives detach himself, and just as little from the faith which that brings with it. We are all born in faith, and he who is blind, follows blindly the secret and irresistible attraction; he who sees, follows by sight, and believes because he will believe.

What unity and completeness, what dignity, does our human nature receive from this view. Our thought is not based on itself, independently of our instincts and inclinations; man does not consist of two existences running parallel to each other; he is absolutely one. Our entire system of thought is founded on intuition, and as is the heart of the individual, so is his knowledge. Our instinct forces on us a certain mode of thought, only so long as we do not perceive the constraint; the moment the constraint appears, it vanishes, and it is no longer the instinct by itself, but we ourselves through our instinct, who form our system of thought.

But it is appointed that I shall open my eyes ; shall learn to know myself ; shall perceive the constraint, and that I shall thus of necessity form my own mode of thought. I am absolutely free—the source of my own spiritual life as of my thought. I would not that my character should be the production of Nature, but of myself, and I have become that which I would be.

By the unlimited pursuit of sophistical subtilties I might have darkened and made doubtful the natural view of my own spiritual nature, but I have chosen the system I have now adopted with foresight and deliberation from other possible modes of thought, because I regarded it as the most worthy the dignity of my nature and destiny. Freely and consciously I have returned to the point at which Nature had abandoned me. I admit her declaration, not because I must, but because I will.

The noble destiny to which my understanding is appointed, fills me with reverence. It no longer serves merely to call forth an endless succession of representations proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing ; it is entrusted to me for a great purpose. Its cultivation to this end is confided to my hands, and will be at my hands again required. I know immediately, and my faith requires no further confirmation of this than my immediate consciousness that I am not necessitated to a blind and aimless succession of thoughts, but that I can voluntarily direct my attention to one object, and turn it from another ; that it is I who think, and that I can choose the subject of my thought. By reflection I have found that my whole manner of thinking, and the views which I take of truth, depend only on myself, since I can choose whether I will go on subtilising till I lose all power of recognising truth, or whether I will yield myself to it with faithful obedience. My mode of thinking, the cultivation of my understanding, and the objects to which I direct, it depend entirely on my will. True insight is merit ; the perversion of my capacity for knowledge, thoughtlessness, error, and unbelief, are culpable.



There is but one point towards which I should unceasingly direct my thoughts,—namely, what is appointed for me to do, and what is the most suitable mode of doing it.

My thoughts must bear relation to my actions, and must be regarded as means to this end, otherwise they are idle and aimless, a mere waste of time and strength, and the perversion of a noble power.

I may hope, I may surely promise myself success in this purpose. The Nature on which I have to act is not a system foreign to myself, into which I cannot penetrate. It is regulated by my own laws of thought, and cannot but agree with them; its interior must be transparent, penetrable, and cognoscible to me. It expresses everywhere nothing more than the relations of my own being, and I may hope as certainly to know it as to know myself. Let me seek only what I should seek, and I shall find; let me ask only what I should ask, and I shall receive an answer.

The voice in my soul in which I will have faith, and for the sake of which I have faith in all else, does not merely command me generally to act, but in every particular situation it declares what I shall do and what leave undone; it accompanies me through every event of my life, and it is impossible for me to contend against it. To listen to it and obey it honestly and impartially, without fear or equivocation, is the business of my existence. My life is no longer an empty play without truth or significance. It is appointed that what conscience ordains me shall be done, and for this purpose am I here. I have understanding to know, and power to execute it.

By conscience alone comes truth and reality into my representations. I cannot refuse to it my attention and my obedience, if I would not renounce the end of my existence. It is true, and the foundation of all other truth and reality, that its voice is to be obeyed, and consequently all is true which is assumed in the possibility of such an obedience.

There appear before me in space, certain phænomena, to

which I transfer the idea of myself. I conceive them as being like myself. A certain speculative system has indeed taught me, or would teach me, that these rational beings out of myself are but the productions of my own power of representative perception; that according to the laws of my thought I am compelled to carry my ideas thus out of myself, and that by the same laws I can only apply them to certain conceptions of space, time and the like. But the law of my conscience requires me to regard them as free substantive existences, entirely independent of myself, and declares that the purposes of their being lie in themselves, and that I dare by no means interfere with their fulfilment, nay, that I am bound to forward it to the utmost of my power. It commands me to reverence their freedom, and to sympathise in their destiny as similar to my own. In this manner will and must I act towards them, if I have resolved to obey the voice of my conscience; and regarding them from this point, the speculations which perplexed me vanish like an empty dream. I think of them as beings like myself I have said; but strictly speaking, it is not by mere thought that they are presented to me as such. It is by the voice of my conscience saying, "This is the limit of thy freedom; here know and reverence the aims of others." This is but translated into the thought, here is another being free and independent like thyself, thy fellow creature!

There appear before me other phænomena, which I do not regard as beings like myself, but as things irrational. Speculation finds no difficulty in showing how these are developed from, and are the necessary productions of, my own representative perceptions. But I apprehend these things, also, by want, and desire, and enjoyment. Not by the mental conception alone, but by hunger, and thirst, and satiety, does anything become for me food and drink. I am necessitated to believe in the reality of that which threatens my sensuous existence, or in that which alone is able to maintain it. Conscience comes to the assistance of this natural in

stinct, and consecrates and limits it. Thou shalt preserve, exercise, strengthen thy sensuous power, for it has been counted upon in the plans of reason; but thou canst only preserve it by employing it in a manner conformable to the inward laws of these things. There are, also, other beings in thy likeness, upon whose force, also, calculation has been made, as upon thine. Permit to them the same use of all that has been allowed to thee. Respect, as their right, what is destined for them; what is destined for thee, as thine. Thus shall I act—according to this action must I think. I am compelled to regard these things as standing under their own laws, independent of, though perceivable by, me—the laws of nature, and therefore to ascribe to them an independent existence. I am compelled to believe in such laws, the task of investigating them is set before me, and that empty speculation vanishes like a mist before the sun. In short, there is for me no such thing as a pure existence, in which I have no concern, and which I contemplate merely for the sake of the contemplation. It exists for me merely by its relation to me, and there is one relation to which all others are subordinate—that of moral action. My world is the object and sphere of my duties, and absolutely nothing more; my capacity, and the capacity of all finite beings, is insufficient to comprehend any other.

## CHAPTER XI.

### FAITH.

ALL which exists for me, presses on me by this relation only its existence and reality ; only by this do I apprehend it, and I have no organ by which to apprehend any other existence.

To the question, whether, in deed and in fact, such a world is present as I represent to myself, can I give no more fundamental answer—none more raised above doubt, than this. I have, most certainly, such and such determinate duties, and they cannot be otherwise fulfilled than in such a world as I represent to myself. Even to any who had never meditated on his moral destiny, if there could be such a one, or who had never formed any resolution concerning it, even with a view to an indefinite future, even for him, his sensuous world, and his belief in its reality, arises in no other manner than from his ideas of a moral world. If he should not apprehend this by the thought of his duties, he certainly will by the demand for his rights. What he does not require of himself he will certainly require of others ; that they should treat him with consideration, not as an irrational thing, but as a free and intelligent being ; and thus, that they may be enabled to meet his own claims, he will be necessitated to regard them, also, as free and independent of mere natural agency. If he proposes to himself no other object in his relations to things surrounding him than that of enjoyment, he at least requires this enjoyment as a right, and demands from others that they should leave him undisturbed in this enjoyment ; and thus embraces even the world of sense in his moral idea. These claims of regard for the preservation of his own existence, for his free-

dom and rationality, no one will willingly renounce ; and in his ideas of these claims, at least, is found earnestness and belief in reality, and denial of doubt, if even they are not associated with the acknowledgment of a moral law in his heart.

It is not therefore the operation of what we regard as things external, which do indeed exist for us only inasmuch as we know of them, and just as little the play of imagination and thought, whose products as such are no more than empty pictures, but the necessary faith in our own freedom and energy, and in the reality of our actions, and of certain laws of human action, which lie at the root of all our consciousness of external reality, a consciousness which is itself only belief, founded on another unavoidable belief. We are compelled to admit that we act, and that we ought to act, in a certain manner ; we are compelled to assume a certain sphere for this action—this sphere is the actual world as we find it. From the necessity of action proceeds the consciousness of the external world, and not the reverse way, from the consciousness of the external world the necessity of action. From the latter is the former deduced. We do not act because we know, but we know because we are destined to act ; practical reason is the root of all reason. The laws of action for rational creatures are of *immediate certainty* ; and their world is only certain so far as these are so. We cannot deny them without annihilating the world, and ourselves with it. We raise ourselves from nothing, and maintain ourselves above it solely by our moral agency.

I am required to act, but can I act without having in view something beyond the action itself, without directing my intentions to something which could only be attained by my action ? Can I will, without willing some particular thing ? To every action is united in thought, immediately and by the laws of thought itself, some future existence—a state of being related to my action as effect to cause. This object of my action is not, however, to determine my mode of action—I

am not to place the object before me, and then determine how I am to act that I may attain it—my action is not to be dependent on the object, but I am to act in a certain manner, merely because it is my duty so to act; this is the first point. That some consequence will follow this action I know, and this consequence necessarily becomes an object to me, since I am bound to perform the action which must bring it to pass. I will that something shall happen, because I am to act so that it may happen. As I do not hunger because food is present, but a thing becomes food for me because I hunger, so I do not act thus, or thus, because a certain end is to be attained, but the end is to be attained since I must act in the manner to attain it. I do not observe a certain point, and allow its position to determine the direction of my line, and the angle that it shall make; but I draw simply a right angle, and by that determine the points through which my line must pass. The end does not determine the commandment, but the commandment the end.

I say it is the law of my action, itself, which points out to me its object. The same inward voice that compels me to think I ought to act thus, compels me also to believe that my action will have some result; it opens to my spiritual vision a prospect into another world—another and a better than that which is sensually present to me; it makes me aspire after this better world, embrace it with every impulse, live in it, and in it alone find satisfaction and tranquillity. The law of my action guarantees to me the certain attainment of its object. The resolution to direct all my powers of life and thought to fulfil this law brings with it the immoveable conviction, that the promise implied in it is true and certain. As I live in obedience to it, I live also in the contemplation of its end; live in that better world which it foretells to me.

Even in the mere consideration of the world as it is, apart from this law, I am conscious of the wish—the earnest desire—the absolute demand for a better. I cast a glance upon the present relations of mankind among themselves and to

nature, upon the weakness of their powers, the strength of their passions and desires. I cannot think of the present state of humanity as of one destined to be permanent, as its entire and ultimate destination. Then, indeed, were all a dream and a delusion, and it would not be worth the toil of living to renew perpetually this idle game, tending to nothing, signifying nothing.

Only inasmuch as I may contemplate it as the means to a better, as the transition point to a higher and more perfect state, does it obtain any value in my eyes. Not for its own sake, but for the sake of that which it prepares us for, can I support it, esteem it, and joyfully perform my part in it. My mind can take no hold on the present world, nor rest in it a moment, but my whole nature rushes onward with irresistible force towards that future and better state of being.

Shall I eat and drink only that I may hunger and thirst, and eat and drink again, till the grave which yawns beneath my feet shall swallow me up, and I myself become the food of worms? Shall I beget other beings in my likeness, that they too may eat and drink and die, and leave behind them other beings to do the like? To what purpose this perpetually revolving circle, this everlasting repetition, in which things are produced only to perish, and perish to be again produced; this monster continually swallowing itself up, that it may again bring itself forth, and bringing itself forth only that it may again swallow itself up?

Never! never! can this be my destiny or that of my race. There must be something, which is, because it has become thus, and remains permanently, and can never become again. And what is to endure must be brought forth in the changes of what is transitory and perishable, and be carried forward safe and inviolate upon the waves of time.

Our race still struggles for its subsistence and preservation with a resisting nature. Still is the larger portion of mankind condemned to severe toil, in order to procure nourishment for itself and for the smaller portion which thinks for it; im-

mortal spirits are forced to fix their whole thoughts and endeavours on the ground that brings forth their food. Often does it happen that when the toil is finished, and the labourer promises himself its long lasting fruits, a hostile element will destroy in a moment the results of long-continued industry and patient deliberation, and cast him out a prey to misery and hunger. Storms, floods, volcanoes, desolate whole countries, and works bearing the impress of a rational soul, are hurled, with their authors, into the wild chaos of death and destruction. Disease snatches into an untimely grave men in the pride of their strength, and children whose existence has yet borne no fruit; pestilence sweeps blooming lands; and regions, won from the wilderness by the toil of man, become deserts again. Thus it is now, but thus shall it not be for ever. No work bearing the stamp of reason, and undertaking to enlarge her dominion, can ever wholly perish. The victory which the irregular violence of conflicting elements has obtained, must at least tend to their exhaustion and ultimate reconciliation. All those outbreaks of the power of nature before which the strength of man sinks into nothing, those earthquakes, those desolating hurricanes, those volcanoes, can be nothing more than the last struggles of the crude mass, against the subjection to regular progressive laws to which it is compelled, nothing but the last strokes of the not yet complete formation of our globe. That resistance must gradually become weaker and be at length exhausted, since in the regular course of things there can be nothing to renew its strength; that formation must be at length completed, and our destined dwelling be made ready. Nature must gradually attain such a point of development that her proceedings can be securely counted upon, and that her power shall bear a determinate proportion to that which is destined to contract it—that of man. Insomuch as this proportion has already been established, and civilization obtained a firm footing, the works of man, by their mere existence, shall re-act on Nature, with a new and vivifying force beyond the intention of their



authors. The more regular and various culture of the soil shall give a new impulse to life, and vegetation shall ameliorate and disperse the heavy and baneful vapours that hang over deserts, marshes, and primeval forests, and the sun shall pour more animating rays into an atmosphere breathed by healthful, industrious, and cultivated nations. Science, first awakened by the impulse of necessity, shall now calmly study the unchangeable laws of Nature, and calculate their possible consequences ; and while closely following the footsteps of Nature in the actual world, form for itself a new ideal one. Every new discovery shall be retained, and form the foundation for further knowledge, and be added to an accumulating stock, the common possession of our race. Nature shall become more and more intelligible, and transparent light shall be thrown on her profoundest mysteries, and human power, armed by human invention, shall exercise over her a boundless control, and the conquest once made, be peacefully maintained. No further expenditure of mechanical toil shall be necessary than what the human body requires for its exercise and healthy development ; and work shall cease to be a burden, for a reasonable being is not destined to be a bearer of burdens.

## CHAPTER XII.

### FAITH.

THE greatest and most terrible disorders are not, however, the effects of natural causes, but of freedom itself; man is the cruellest enemy of man. Lawless hordes of savages still wander over vast wildernesses; man meets his fellow man as a foe, and perhaps triumphs in devouring him for food. Where civilization has succeeded in uniting these wild hordes, and subjecting them to the social law, they attack each other as nations with the power which law and union has given them. Defying toil, and danger, and privation, armies penetrate forests and cross wide plains, till they meet each other, and the sight of their brethren is the signal for mutual murder. Armed with the most splendid inventions of human ingenuity, hostile fleets traverse the ocean; through waves and storms man rushes to meet man upon the lonely, inhospitable sea, to destroy, each the other with their own hands, amidst the raging of the elements.

In the interior of states, where men seem to be united in equality under the law, it is for the most part only force and fraud which rule in her venerable name, and this kind of war is so much the more shameful that it is not openly declared to be such, and the party attacked is not aware of the necessity of defence.

Smaller associations rejoice aloud in the ignorance, the folly, the vice and misery of the greater number of their brethren, and make it confessedly their object to retain them in this condition, in order to prolong their subjection. No movement towards its amelioration can anywhere be made without

raising up a host of selfish interests to war with the mover; who must be prepared to see the most various and contradictory opinions leagued together against him in common hostility. The good cause is ever the weaker, for it can be loved for itself alone; the bad attracts each individual by the promise most seductive to him, whilst the clash of contending interests is hushed in one common opposition to the good wherever it is found. Scarcely, indeed, is such an opposition needed, for error, misunderstanding and distrust divide even the good, and the divisions are widened by the earnestness with which each strives to carry out his own views of what is best, and thus is dissipated and lost, the strength which, even if united, would hardly suffice to hold the scale even. One blames the other for rushing with stormy impetuosity towards his object, without waiting till time should have opened the way to it; whilst the other blames him for hesitation and cowardice, for allowing things to be done contrary to his better conviction, and for never regarding the present moment as the right one for action. The Omniscient alone can determine which of the disputants is in the right.

Every one regards the point to which he has devoted himself, and which he best understands, as the most important and necessary, the point where all reform must begin; he requires all to unite with him for the execution of his particular object, and regards it as treason to the good cause if they refuse. Thus do all good intentions among men appear to be lost in fruitless strivings, whilst, in the mean time, all goes on as well, or as ill, as it would do without these struggles, by the mere blind mechanism of Nature.

Thus is it now, but thus shall it not be for ever, or human life would be an idle game, without meaning and without end. Those savage hordes shall not always remain savage: no race can be born with all the capacities of perfect humanity, yet destined never to develop these faculties, or to become more than a sagacious animal might be. Those savages are destined to be the progenitors of generations of powerful, civil-

ized, and virtuous men, or their existence would be without an object. The most cultivated nations of modern times are the descendants of savages. Whether human society naturally tends towards this cultivation, or that the first impulse must be given by instruction and example from without, and the original source of all human culture must be a revelation from above,—by the same path, whatever it may be, which former savage tribes have followed, may the present also attain it. They must, no doubt, pass through the same perils of a first merely sensual civilization, with which society is still struggling, but they will nevertheless be brought into association with the great whole of humanity, and be enabled to take part in its further progress.

It is the destiny of our race to become united into one great body, thoroughly connected in all its parts, and possessed of similar culture. Nature, and even the passions and vices of Man, have from the beginning tended towards this end. A great part of the way towards it is already passed, and we may surely calculate that it will in time be reached.

Let us not ask of history if man on the whole be yet become more purely moral ! To a more extended, comprehensive power he has certainly attained, although as yet this power has been too often perhaps necessarily misapplied. Neither let us ask whether the intellectual and æsthetic culture of the antique world, concentrated on a few points, may not, in degree, have excelled that of modern days. The answer might be a humiliating one, and it might appear that in these respects the human race had rather retrograded than advanced in the course of time. But let us ask at what period the existing culture has been most widely diffused, and distributed among the greatest number of individuals ; and we shall doubtless find that from the beginning of history to our own day, the brightness of those few points has been extending in wider and wider circles, and that one individual after the other, one nation after the other, has been illuminated, and that the light is spreading further and further under our own eyes.

This is the first station point of humanity on its endless path. Until this has been attained, until the existing culture of every age has been diffused over the whole inhabited earth, and every people be capable of the most unlimited communication with the rest, must one nation after another, one continent after another, be arrested in its course, and sacrifice to the great whole of which it is a member, its stationary or retrogressive age. When that first point shall have been attained, when thought and discovery shall fly from one end of the earth to the other, and become the property of all, then without further interruption, without halt or regress, our race shall move onward, with united strength and equal step, to a perfection of culture, to describe which thought and language fail.

In the interior of those associations formed rather by fortuitous circumstances, than by reason, called States,—after they have subsisted for a time, when the resistance excited by new oppression has been lulled to sleep, and the fermentation of contending forces appeased, abuse, by its continuance, and by general endurance, assumes a sort of permanent form, and the ruling classes, in the uncontested enjoyment of the privileges they have gained, have nothing more to do than to extend them further, and to secure also this extension. Urged by this insatiable desire, they will continue these encroachments from generation to generation, and never cry “hold, enough!” till the measure of oppression shall be full, and despair give back to the oppressed, what centuries of injustice had deprived them of courage to claim. They will then no longer endure any among them who cannot be content to be on an equality with others. As a protection against reciprocal injustice or new oppression, all will take on themselves the same obligations. Their deliberations, in which every one shall decide, whatever he decides, for himself, and not for one subject to him, whose sufferings will never reach him, and in whose fate he takes no concern—these deliberations, in which no one can hope to be the one to commit an injustice, but

every one must fear that he may suffer it—these deliberations, which alone deserve the name of legislation, unlike the ordinances of a league of lords to the numerous herds of their slaves—these institutions will be necessarily just, and will lay the foundation of a true state, in which each individual, by the care for his own security, will be compelled to pay regard to the security of others, since every injury attempted must infallibly recoil on him who attempts it.

By the establishment of this true state, and of a firm inward peace, is at the same time foreign war, at least with other *true* states, become impossible. In order to avoid doing injury to its own citizens by accustoming them to injustice, violence, and robbery, and pointing out other roads to gain than those of diligence and activity, every true state will as severely prohibit, as carefully prevent, or as exactly compensate and as severely punish, an injury to the citizen of a neighbouring state, as to one of its own. This law concerning the security of neighbours is a necessary one to every state that is not an association of robbers, and by this means is every just complaint of other states prevented, and every case of necessary defence among nations entirely obviated. There will be no longer necessary, permanent, and intimate relations of states as such with each other, which might lead to strife, but usually only of individual citizens with individual citizens: a state can be injured only in the person of one of its citizens, and the injury is atoned for by immediate compensation.

Between such states as these, is no rank to insult, no ambition to offend. No officer of one state can be entitled to mingle in the internal affairs of another, nor could he hope to draw the smallest advantage from any influence he could so obtain.

That a whole nation should determine, for the sake of plunder, to make war on a neighbour, is impossible; for in a state where all are equal, the plunder could not be the portion of some few, but must be divided amongst all, and the share of no individual could ever repay the cost of the

war to him. Only where all the advantage falls to the oppressor, and all the toil and suffering to the numerous herd of his slaves, is a war of this nature possible and conceivable. States like these could have nothing to fear from states resembling them ; but merely from savages, or barbarians, who, unskilled to enrich themselves by industry, would fain do so by war ; or from nations of slaves, driven by their masters to a war from which they will reap no advantage. As to the first, every individual state must, by the arts of civilization, necessarily be the stronger ; against the latter, it is the obvious policy of all to strengthen themselves by union. It is evidently dangerous to the tranquillity of free states to suffer others to exist as their neighbours, to whom wars of conquest might be advantageous ; and it is, therefore, to their interest to see all around them free, and to extend for their own states the victories of civilization over barbarism, of freedom over slavery. Soon will the nations civilized by them, find themselves placed in the same relation towards others still enslaved, and compelled to pursue towards them the same course of conduct ; and thus, of necessity, by the existence of some few really free states, the diffusion of civilization, freedom, and universal peace embrace the whole globe.

Thus, from the establishment of a just and upright internal government, and of peace between individuals, will necessarily follow integrity in the external relations of states, and universal peace among them. The establishment of a just and upright internal government, however, and the liberation of the first nation that shall be really free, must be the necessary consequence of the increasing pressure of the dominant classes, upon those beneath them ; and the operation of this cause may be safely left to the passions and the blindness of those classes, even notwithstanding all warnings they may receive. In these only true states all temptation to evil will be taken away, and there will be every possible inducement to every man to direct his will to what is good.

No human creature ever loved evil for the sake of evil; but only the advantages and enjoyments he hoped from it, and which in fact, in the present condition of humanity, do sometimes result from it. As long as this condition shall continue, as long as a premium shall be set on vice, no thorough reformation of mankind, as a whole, can ever be looked for. But in a social constitution, such as we have imagined, evil conduct will offer no advantages—nay, rather will be certainly prejudicial, and by the operation of self-love itself will the extravagances of self-love in unjust actions be repressed.

By the institutions of such a state will every injury to others, every encroachment on their rights, not merely be vain, but assuredly prejudicial to him who should make the attempt.

In his own country—out of his country—on the whole earth, he shall find no one whom he can injure with impunity. No one will resolve on wickedness which he can never execute, and which can produce nothing but his own damage. The use of liberty for evil purposes is taken away; man must resolve either to renounce his free agency, and become a mere passive machine in the great whole, or to employ it for good. And thus, in soil thus prepared, will good easily prosper. When men shall be no longer divided by a selfish separation of interests, and their powers exhausted in a struggle with each other, nothing will remain for them but to turn their united strength against their common antagonist, a resisting, still uncultivated nature. No longer distracted by private ends, they will unite for a common object, and form one body, every where animated by the same spirit, and the same love. Every loss to the individual is a loss to the whole; every step forward made by one man is a step forward for his race. The strife of good and evil is abolished, for the evil finds no place. The strife of the good between themselves is abolished, for each regards what is good for its own sake, and not because he is the author of it. That the truth should be discovered, that the useful action should be done, is



all important; not at all by whom it shall be done. Every one is ready to join his strength to that of others, to become subordinate to others; and whoever is most capable will be supported by all, and his success rejoiced in by all, with an equal joy.

This, then, is the object of our earthly existence, which reason sets before us, and for the infallible attainment of which she is our warrant. This is not merely the goal towards which we must all strive, that we may exercise our powers on something great that is never to be realised; it shall, it must be realised, as surely as a sensuous world and a race of reasonable beings exist in time, and for whose existence no serious and rational purpose but this is conceivable. If all human life be merely a spectacle for a malignant spirit, if this inextinguishable longing after the eternal and imperishable, this ceaseless pursuit of what for ever escapes us, this restless hurrying forward in an ever-revolving circle, be merely a mocking jest, shall not a wise man refuse to play his part in such an idle pageant, and the moment of awakening reason be the last of his earthly life? If this shall not be, then is this end an unattainable one.

It is attainable in life and through life, and reason herself is the pledge to me for its attainment in commanding me to live.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### FAITH.

BUT when this goal shall have been attained, and the human race at length stand at this point, what then? There can be no higher state upon earth, and the generation which has once reached it, can do no more than maintain itself there, and die and leave it to descendants who must also do the same. Humanity must then become stationary; and therefore can this, the highest earthly end, not be the highest end of human existence? This earthly end is conceivable, and attainable, and finite. If we consider all preceding generations as merely means for the production of this last complete one, we do not escape the question of reason—to what end then is this last one? Since a human race is come upon the earth, its existence must, indeed, have an end accordant with, and not contrary to, reason; but were it not better that it had never been withdrawn from night and chaos? Reason does not exist for the sake of life, but life for the sake of reason. An existence which does not of itself satisfy reason and solve all her doubts, cannot be the true one.

And are then, indeed, the actions which the voice of conscience commands—that voice whose dictates I never dare dispute—are they always the means, and the only means, for the attainment of this grand end of human existence? It is indisputable that in acting thus, my intentions must be directed to this end; but are then these, my intentions, always fulfilled? Is it enough that we will what is good, that it may happen? Oh, how many virtuous intentions are

entirely lost for this world, and how many appear rather likely to oppose than to forward the end we have in view ! On the other hand, how often do the most despicable passions of men, their vices and their crimes, forward more certainly the good cause, than the endeavours of the upright man, who will never do evil that good may come of it ! It seems that the good of the world is destined to grow and prosper, quite independently of all human virtues and vices, by its own laws, through an invisible and unknown power, as the heavenly bodies run their appointed course, high above all human effort ; and that this power carries forward in its own grand plan all human intentions, good and bad, and moulds to its own high purposes that which was undertaken for others far different.

If the attainment of this earthly end, therefore, could be the whole object and end of our existence, and that thus every question might be solved, then would this end be not ours, but the end of that unknown power. We can never at any moment know with certainty what will tend to the advancement of this end ; and nothing would remain to us but to give by our actions some material, no matter what, for this power to work upon, and to leave to it the care of moulding this material to its own purposes.

It would, in that case, be the highest wisdom not to trouble ourselves about what does not concern us, but to live as our inclinations might lead us, and calmly leave the consequences to that unknown power. The moral law in our hearts would be idle and superfluous, and entirely unsuitable to a being destined to nothing higher than this.

In order to come into harmony with ourselves, we cannot refuse obedience to that voice and repress it by all means as a troublesome and foolish fancy.

Yet will I not refuse obedience to the voice of my conscience : as truly as I live and breathe will I live according to her dictates, and let this resolution be first and highest in my

mind, that on which all else depends, but which depends on nothing else,—the inward principle of my spiritual life.

As a reasonable being, however, I find it impossible to act without knowing why and for what ; without placing before me something as the object and end of my action. If this obedience be a reasonable obedience, if the voice that I obey be really that of my highest reason, and not a mere delusion of fancy, or an enthusiasm communicated to me somehow from without, this obedience must have some consequences, must serve to some end. It is evident that this end is not that of earthly existence, or of the present world. It must be then that of a higher world, above the present.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FAITH.

THE veil of delusion falls from my eyes! I receive a new organ, and a new world opens before me. It is disclosed to me only by the law of reason. I apprehend this world (for, confined, as I am, within sensuous views, I must thus name the unnameable)—I apprehend this world merely in and through the end for which my obedience to the law of conscience was appointed.

How could I ever suppose that this law had reference to the world of sense, or that the whole end and object of this obedience was to be found within the plan and scope of earthly existence, since that on which alone this obedience depends can never be an effective cause in this world, and can never have any result.

In the world of sense, moving on the chain of material causes and effects, in which whatever happens must depend on whatever happened before, it can never be of any moment with what intentions and dispositions an action is performed, but merely what the action is. Had it been the whole purpose of our existence to produce any earthly state of humanity, the thing required would have been some infallible mechanism by which our actions might have been invariably determined, and we need have been no more than wheels well fitted to such a machine. Free agency would have been, not merely vain, but positively injurious; and our good intentions, our virtuous will, entirely superfluous. The world would be, in that case, most ill regulated, and the purposes of its existence attained by the most circuitous methods and by a needless

profusion. Had the Divine Author of it, instead of bestowing on us this freedom, so hard to be reconciled with the other parts of His plan, chosen rather to compel us to act in the manner most conformable to them, these ends might have been attained by a shorter method, as the humblest of the dwellers in these His worlds can see.

But I am free, and therefore such a chain of causes and effects as would render freedom superfluous and purposeless, cannot include my whole destination. I am free, and it is not merely my action, produced by mechanical means, but the free determination of my free will to obey the voice of conscience, for the sake of conscience only, that decides my moral worth.

The everlasting world now rises before me more brightly, and the fundamental laws of its order are more clearly revealed to my mental vision. The will alone, lying hid from mortal eyes in the obscurest depths of the soul, is the first link in a chain of consequences that stretches through the invisible realms of spirit, as, in this terrestrial world, the action itself, a certain movement communicated to matter, is the first link in a material chain that encircles the whole system. The will is the effective cause, the living principle of the world of spirit, as motion is of the world of sense. I stand between two opposite worlds; the one visible, in which the act alone avails; the other invisible and incomprehensible, acted on only by the will. I am an effective force in both these worlds. My will embraces both. This will is in itself a constituent part of the transcendental world. By my free determination I change and set in motion something in this transcendental world, and my energy gives birth to an effect that is new, permanent and imperishable. Let this will manifest itself in a material deed, and this deed belongs to the world of sense, and produces in it whatever effect it can.

It is not only when the tie which bends me to this terrestrial world shall have been broken, that I shall obtain admission into the transcendental one. I am and live already in it.

more truly than in the terrestrial. On it alone do I rest even now, and for the sake only of the everlasting life, on the possession of which I have already entered, can I wish to continue this earthly one. What we call heaven does not lie only on the other side of the grave; it is diffused over nature here, and its light dawns on every pure heart. My will is mine, and it is all that is truly mine, and entirely dependent on myself, and through it am I already become a citizen of those realms of freedom and spiritual activity. What determination of my will (of the only thing which raises me from the dust to enter these realms) may be conformable to their order, the voice of my conscience alone can tell me, for that is the tie by which I am united to them, and it depends only on myself to give it the appointed direction. I prepare myself, then, for this world—prepare myself in it and for it, I pursue my object without doubt or hesitation, certain of success, since no foreign power can interfere with my free will. That in the world of sense my will manifests itself in action, is the law of this sensuous world, but the will alone is wholly and purely mine. It was not necessary that there should be another particular act on my part, to unite it with the deed in which it is manifested; it manifested itself thus according to the law of that second world with which I am connected by my will, and in which this will likewise is an original force.

I am compelled indeed, when I regard my will thus manifested in action as an effective cause in the sensuous world, to regard it as a means to the attainment of that earthly end of human existence; not as if I should first look over the divine plan of the world, and calculate from it what I had to do, but that the action which my conscience tells me to regard as my duty, should appear to me as the only means by which in my position I could contribute to the attainment of that end. If it should afterwards appear that this end has not been advanced,—nay, should it seem even to have been hindered by it, I can never repent, if I have really obeyed my conscience

in acting thus. Whatever consequences it may have for this world, for the other, nothing but good can result from it. And even for this world's sake, should my action appear to have failed of its object, my conscience will command me to persevere in my efforts. Should I fail again and again, and should it appear that during my whole life I have not advanced the good cause a hair's breadth, it is still not permitted to me to cease my struggles in its behalf. Let me be disappointed in my attempts ever so often, I must still believe that the next will be successful. For the spiritual world no step can be ever lost. I do not toil to reach the earthly goal for its own sake alone, or regard it as a final aim ; but rather because obedience to the voice of conscience presents itself to me in this world, as a means of advancing this end. Should it appear otherwise, I might renounce this end, and I shall do so in another life, when some other object, now entirely incomprehensible to me, shall be set before me.

Whether, in this life, the actions resulting from a pure sense of duty, do always tend to the advancement of the great end of the progress of the human race, is not my care. I am responsible only for the will, the intention, but not for the result. I am bound to keep this end in view and to be unwearied in my efforts for its attainment ; but the only certain results of my energy lie beyond this world of sense.

I will endeavour to establish myself firmly in this new view of my destiny. The present life cannot be rationally regarded, as containing the whole end of my existence, or of that of the human race in general. There is something in me, and something is required of me, which finds no application in this life, and which is entirely superfluous and unnecessary for the attainment of the highest objects which can be attained on earth. The existence of man must therefore have some object which lies beyond it. Should however this earthly life, for the purposes of which our reason commands us to exert our best powers, not be entirely vain and fruitless, it must at least have relation to a future one as means to an end.



The ultimate consequences of all our actions, in the present life, must remain on earth, and we are connected with a future world by no other tie than by our will, which, for this world, is entirely fruitless. Our virtuous will only can it, must it be, by which we are destined to prepare for a future state, and for the objects there to be attained ; and the consequences now invisible to us of our upright intentions, will obtain for us a station there, whence we may proceed further on our course.

That our virtuous will, in and for itself, must have some consequences, we know already in this life ; for our reason cannot command what is entirely fruitless. But what these consequences are, or how it is possible that a mere will can effect any thing at all, we know not, and as long as we are confined within the limits of this material world, we cannot know. With respect to the nature of these consequences, the present life, therefore, in relation to the future, is to be regarded as a life in *faith*.

The future, in which we shall be in possession of those consequences, must be a life of clear insight. There as well as here some object must be placed before us, as the end of our exertions, for we must remain active beings. But we must remain finite beings, and our activity must therefore be determinate, and every determinate activity must have an object.

As the actual state of the present world, the degrees of civilization and virtue found to exist among men, and our own powers of action, are related to the objects of this life, so will be to those of the future the consequences of our virtuous will in this.

The present is the commencement of our existence ; a firm footing in it, and an endowment of all the powers and faculties necessary for it, has been freely bestowed on us. The future life will be the continuation of our existence, and our station there we must earn for ourselves.

In this point of view, the present life no longer appears vain and useless ; it is given us that we may obtain for our-

selves a place in the future one, and thus it is connected with our whole immortal life.

It is very possible, that the immediate objects of this second life may not be more certainly attainable by finite powers than those of the present, and that even there a virtuous will may sometimes appear superfluous. But it can never be lost. Its necessary efficacy would, in that case, refer us to a further stage of our progress, in which the consequences of our good will would appear, and in reference to which this second life, also, would be a life of faith, but of faith firmer, and more impossible to be shaken, from our having already experienced the trustworthiness of reason, and gathered the fruits of a pure heart in a perfected life.

As in the present life it is only from a certain law of action that we acquire the idea of a certain object to be attained, and from this our whole intuitive perception of an external world ; just so in the future, upon a similar, and now to us inconceivable law, will be founded our idea of the immediate objects of that life, and the intuitive perception of a world in which we shall perceive the consequences of our good intentions in the present. The world exists for us but by the idea of duty, and the other will be revealed to us in a similar manner, for in no other manner can it be revealed to a reasonable being.

## CHAPTER XV.

### FAITH.

THIS then is my true nature, my whole sublime destination. I am a member of two orders ; of one purely spiritual, in which I rule merely by pure will, and of a sensuous one, in which my act alone avails. The whole aim of reason is its own activity, independent, unconditional, and having no need of any organ beyond itself. The will is the living principle of the rational soul, is indeed itself reason, when purely and simply apprehended. That reason is itself active, means, that the pure will, as such, rules and is effectual. The infinite reason alone lies immediately and entirely in the purely spiritual order. The finite being lives necessarily at the same time in a sensuous order ; that is to say, in one which presents to him other objects than those of pure reason ; a material object, to be advanced by instruments and powers, standing indeed under the immediate command of the will, but whose efficacy is conditional also on its own natural laws. Yet as certainly as reason is reason, must the will operate absolutely by itself, and independently of all the natural laws which determine the action, and therefore does the sensuous life of every finite being point towards a higher, into which the will itself shall lead him, and of which it shall procure him possession, a possession which indeed will be again sensually present as a state, and by no means as a mere will.

These two orders, the purely spiritual, and the sensuous, the latter consisting of an immeasurable succession of states, have existed in me from the first moment of the development of my active reason, and proceed parallel to each other. The

latter producing phænomena cognisable by myself and by other beings similar to myself; the former alone bestowing on them significance, purpose, and value. I am immortal, imperishable, eternal, as soon as I form the resolution to obey the laws of eternal reason; I am not merely destined to become so. The transcendental world is no future world, it is now present; it can at no period of finite existence be more present than at another; not more after the lapse of myriads of ages than at this moment. My future sensuous existence may be liable to various modifications, but these are just as little true life, as those of the present. By that resolution of the will I lay hold on eternity, and rise high above all transitory states of existence. My will itself becomes for me a spring of eternal life, when it becomes a source of moral goodness. Without view to any further object, without inquiry as to whether my will may or may not have any result, it shall be brought into harmony with the moral law. My will shall stand alone, apart from all that is not itself, and be a world to itself, not merely as not proceeding from any thing gone before, but as not giving birth to any thing following, by which its efficacy might be brought under the operation of a foreign law. Did any second effect proceed from it, and from this again a third, in any conceivable sensuous world, opposed to that of spirit, its strength would be broken by the resistance it would encounter, the mode of its operation would no longer exactly correspond to the idea of volition, and the will would not remain free, but be limited by the peculiar laws of its heterogeneous sphere of action.

Thus indeed must I regard the will, in the present material world, the only one known to me. I am indeed compelled to believe, or to act as if I believed, that by my mere volition, my tongue, my hand, my foot, could be set in motion; but how an impulse of intelligence, a mere thought, can be the principle of motion to a heavy material mass, is not only not conceivable, but, to the mere understanding, an absurdity. To the understanding, the movements of matter can only be

explained by the supposition of forces existing in matter itself.

Such a view of the will as I have taken can only be attained by the conviction that it is not merely the highest active principle for this world, as it might be without freedom, and as we imagine a productive force in Nature to be, but that it looks beyond all earthly objects, and includes its own ultimate object in itself. By this view of my will I am referred to a super-sensuous order of things, in which the will, without the assistance of any organ out of itself, becomes, in a purely spiritual sphere, accessible to it and similar to itself, an effective cause. The knowledge that a virtuous will is to be cherished for its own sake, is a fact intuitively perceived, not attainable by any other method. That the promotion of this virtuous will is according to reason, and the source of all that is truly reasonable, that it is not to be adjusted by any thing else, but that all else is to be adjusted by *it*, is a conviction which I have likewise attained by this inward method. From these two terms I arrive at a faith in an eternal super-sensuous world. Should I renounce the first, I abandon at the same time the latter.

If, as many say, assuming it without further proof as self evident, as the highest point of human wisdom, that all human virtue must have a certain definite external aim, and that we must be sure of the attainment of this end, before we can act virtuously; and that, consequently, reason by no means contains within itself the principle and the standard of its own activity, but must discover this standard by the contemplation of the external world,—then might the entire purpose of our existence be found below; our earthly destiny would be entirely explanatory and exhaustive of our human nature, and we should have no rational ground for raising our thoughts above the present life.

As I have now spoken however, can every thinker, who has any where historically received those propositions, also speak and teach, and accurately reason; but he would present to us

the thoughts of others, and not his own, and all would float before him empty, and without significance, because he would be wanting in the sense by which he might seize on its reality. He is like a blind man who may have learned historically certain truths concerning colours, and built upon them just theories, without any colour in fact existing for him. He may say that, under certain conditions, so and so *must be*, but not that it *is* so for him, because he does not stand under these conditions. The sense by which we may lay hold on eternal life, can only be attained by a real renunciation of the sensual and all its objects, for the sake of that law which lays claim only to our will, and not to our act. It surrenders these things with the fullest conviction that this conduct only is truly rational. By this renunciation of the earthly, does the faith in the eternal arise in our soul, and stand there alone, as the sole support to which we can cling, as the only animating principle that can warm our hearts or inspire our lives. We must truly, according to the image of a holy doctrine, first die to the world and be born again, before we can enter the kingdom of God.

I see now clearly the cause of my former indifference and blindness to spiritual things. Occupied only with earthly objects, all my thoughts and endeavours fixed upon them, moved only by desire of a result, of consequences to be realised out of myself, unsusceptible and dead to the pure impulse of legislative reason, which presents to us an end purely spiritual, the immortal Psyche remains with her pinions bound and fastened to the earth.

Our philosophy is the history of our own heart and life, and according to what we find in ourselves is our view of man and his destiny. No true freedom exists for us, so long as we are urged only by the desire of what can be realised in this world. Our freedom is no more than that of the plant, more wonderful in its result, but not in its nature higher; instead of a certain conformation of matter, with roots, leaves and blossoms, bringing forth a mind with thoughts and actions. We

cannot understand true freedom as long as we are not in possession of it; we either draw down the word to our own signification, or simply declare all such phrase to be nonsense. By wanting the knowledge of our own freedom we lose at the same time all sense of another world.

All discussions of this kind pass by us like words with which we have no concern, like pale shadows, without form, or colour, or meaning, on which we know not how to lay hold. Should we be urged by a more active zeal to investigate them, we should separate, see clearly, and be able to prove, that all these ideas are mere worthless and untenable reveries, which a sound understanding will reject at once; and according to the premises from which we should proceed, drawn from our own experience, we should be perfectly in the right.

The doctrines preached in the midst of us, even to the populace, and from special authority, concerning moral freedom, duty, and everlasting life, are turned into romantic fables; and have no more reality for us than those of Tartarus and the Elysian fields, although, from an opinion of their utility in restraining the people, we do not say this openly.

In one word, it is only by the thorough amelioration of the will that a new light is thrown on our existence and future destiny; without this, let me meditate as much as I will, and be endowed with ever such rare intellectual gifts, darkness remains in me, and around me. The improvement of the heart alone leads to true wisdom; let then my whole life tend to this end!

## CHAPTER XVI.

### FAITH.

My virtuous will, then, in and through itself, shall certainly and invariably produce consequences. Every determination of my will in accordance with duty, even if it should not result in any action, shall operate in another, to me incomprehensible, world, and nothing but this shall operate in it. In thinking thus, I assume that there exists a law, that is, a certain rule liable to no exception, by which a virtuous will must have consequences, just as in this material world there exists a law by which this ball, thrown by my hand with a certain force, in a certain direction, necessarily moves in a certain direction with a certain degree of velocity,—perhaps strikes another ball with a certain amount of force, which in its turn moves on with a certain velocity, and so on. As here in the mere direction and movement of my hand, I know, and mentally embrace, in my calculations, all the subsequent directions and movements, with the same certainty as if they were already present and perceived by me; just so does a virtuous will originate a series of necessary and inevitable consequences in the spiritual world, except that I cannot calculate them, but merely know that they must be, without being able to tell by what means. I thus obtain the idea of a law of the spiritual world, in which my pure will is one of the moving forces, as my hand is one of the moving forces of the material world. The idea of this law of the spiritual world, and the firmness of my confidence in it, are one and the same thought, as the security with which I reckon on a certain motion of a material body, and the idea of a mechanical law of nature on



which it depends, are one and the same. The idea of *law* expresses nothing more than the firm, immoveable repose of reason on an idea, and the impossibility of believing the contrary.

I assume the existence of such a law of a spiritual world,—not made by my will, nor by the will of any finite being, nor by the will of all finite beings taken together, but to which they are all subject. Neither I nor any finite and sensual being, is able to conceive how a mere will can have any consequences at all, or what they can be; for in this consists the very essential characteristic of our finite nature, that we are unable to conceive this. We have indeed the mere will as such in our power, but since we cannot conceive its consequences, we cannot propose them to ourselves as objects. I cannot say that, in the material world, my hand, or any other body belonging to it, and subject to the universal law of gravitation, gives this law of motion; for it stands itself under this law, and is able to set another body in motion merely in accordance with it, and inasmuch as it partakes of the universal moving power of Nature. Just as little does a finite will give the law to the transcendental world, which no finite spirit can embrace, but all finite wills stand under this law, and can become efficient causes in that world, only inasmuch as that law exists, and they bring themselves under its operation by a conformity to moral duty, the only tie which unites us to this higher world, and the only organ that can enable us to re-act upon it. As the universal force of attraction holds bodies together in themselves, and to each other, so does that super-sensual law unite and hold together all finite reasonable beings. My will, and the will of all finite beings, may be regarded in a twofold point of view; as a moving principle in the sensual world—for instance, of my hand, from whose movement, again, other movements follow; and as a moving principle in the transcendental world, giving rise to a series of spiritual consequences of which as yet I have no conception. In the first point of view, as a mere volition, it stands wholly in my

own power ; in the latter point of view, as an effective cause, it does not depend on me, but on the laws to which I am subject ; to the law of nature in the world of sense, and to the supersensual law in that which is transcendental.

What, then, is this law of the spiritual world which I conceive ? I believe it to be this ; that my will, absolutely of itself, and without the intervention of any instrument that might weaken its effect, shall act in a sphere perfectly congenial—reason upon reason, spirit upon spirit ; in a sphere to which it does not give the laws of life, of activity, of progress, but which has them in itself, therefore, upon self-active reason. But spontaneous, self-active reason is will. The law of the transcendental world must, therefore, be a Will. A Will which operates purely as will ; of itself, without other instrumentality or sensual material for its operation, which is, at the same time, will and act, with whom to will is to do—to command is to execute. A Will, which is itself law ; liable to no accident or caprice, nor requiring previous thought and hesitation—eternal, unchangeable, on which we may infallibly reckon as the mortal counts securely on the laws of his material world. That sublime Omnipotent Will does not dwell apart. There exists between him and all his rational creatures a spiritual bond, and he himself is this spiritual bond of the rational universe. Let me will, purely and decidedly, my duty, and in the spiritual world, at least, I shall not fail of success. Every virtuous resolution of a finite being influences the Omnipotent Will (if I may be allowed to use such an expression), not in consequence of a momentary approval, but of an everlasting law of his being. With surprising clearness does this thought now come before my soul, which hitherto was surrounded by darkness ; the thought that my will, as such merely, and of itself, could have any consequences.

It has these consequences because it is immediately and infallibly perceived by another Will to which it bears affinity, which is at the same time will and act, and the only living principle of the spiritual world ; its first results are in him,

and, through him, on the world, which is but the product of the Infinite Will.

Thus—(for the mortal must speak in his own language,)—thus do I communicate with that Infinite Will; and through the voice of conscience in my heart, which proclaims to me what I have to do in every situation of my life, does he again communicate with me. That voice, sensualized and translated into my language, is the oracle of the Eternal, which announces to me what is to be my part in the order of the spiritual world, or in the Infinite Will, who himself makes that order. I cannot, indeed, see through, or over, that spiritual order, and I need not to do so. I am but a link in the chain, and can no more judge of the whole, than a single tone can judge of an entire harmony. But what I, myself, shall be in this harmony of spirits I must know, and this is revealed to me. Thus am I connected with the Infinite One, and there is nothing real, lasting, imperishable in me, but the voice of conscience, and my free obedience to it. By the first, the spiritual world bows down to me, and embraces me as one of its members; by the second I raise myself into it; and the Infinite Will unites me with it, and is the source of it, and of me. This only is the true and imperishable, for which my soul has yearned. All else is but phænomenon—phantasm, which vanishes, and returns in a new form.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### FAITH.

THE Infinite Will unites me with himself, and with all finite beings such as myself. The great mystery of the invisible world, and its fundamental law, inasmuch as it is a world or system of many individual wills, is the union, and reciprocal action, of many self-active and independent wills; a mystery which lies in the present life, obvious to all, without any deeming it matter for wonder. The voice of conscience, which imposes on each his particular duty, is the ray proceeding from the Infinite One to each individual, the true constituent and basis of his life. The absolute freedom of the will, which we derive from the Infinite, and bring with us into the world of time, is the principle of this our life. I act, and the sensual perception by which alone I become a personal intelligence being supposed, it is easy to conceive that I must know of this my action, and that it must appear as a fact in a sensual world, and that inversely by the same sensualization, the, in itself, purely spiritual law of duty should appear as the command to such or such an action. It is conceivable that a world should appear to me as the condition of this action, and in part the consequence and product of it. Thus far I remain on my own territory; all this has developed itself purely out of myself; I contemplate only my own state of being. But in this, my world, I admit, also, the operations of other beings independent of me, and self-active like myself. That they should know of their own operations, as I of mine, is conceivable. But how I should know of them is entirely inconceivable, as it is that they should have the knowledge of my existence, and

its manifestations which I ascribe to them. How do they enter my world, or I theirs—since the principle by which we become conscious of ourselves and our operations, finds here no application? How have free spirits knowledge of free spirits, since we know that free spirits are the only reality, and that a substantial external world of matter, through which they might act on each other, is not to be thought of. Or shall we still say, we perceive our rational fellow beings by the changes they produce in the material world? In this case it may be asked again, how we perceive these changes? I comprehend very well that we should perceive changes brought about by the mechanism of nature; for the law of this mechanism is no other than the law of our own thought. But the changes of which we speak are not brought about by the mechanism of nature, but by a free will raised above all nature; and only inasmuch as we thus regard them, do we infer the existence of beings like ourselves. By what law in ourselves, then, could we discover the manifestations of other beings absolutely independent of us? In short, this mutual recognition and reciprocal action of free beings in this world, is perfectly inexplicable by the laws of nature, or of thought, and can only be explained by the supposition of their being all united in the one Infinite Will, supporting each in his sphere. The knowledge which we have of each other does not flow immediately from you to me, and from me to you, for we are separated by an insurmountable barrier; but we recognise each other in him who is the common source of our being. My conscience commands me to respect in a fellow creature the image of freedom upon the earth. Again,—whence come our feelings, our sensual perceptions, our discursive laws of thought, on which is founded the external world which we behold, in which we believe we influence each other? With respect to the two last, it is no answer to say, these are the laws of reason in itself. For us, indeed, it may be impossible to conceive any other law of reason than that under which we stand, but the actual law of reason in itself is

the law of the transcendental world, or of that sublime Will, whence comes the universal agreement in feelings, which, nevertheless, are something positive, immediate, inexplicable. From this agreement, however, in feeling, perception, and in the laws of thought, proceeds our agreement in that sensual world which we all behold.

This unanimity concerning the external world, which we all receive as the sphere of our duty, is, when closely looked into, just as incomprehensible as our unanimity concerning the products of our reciprocal free agency. This is the result of the one Everlasting Infinite Will. Our faith in duty, of which we have spoken, is faith in him, in his reason, in his truth. The only pure and absolute truth which we admit in the external world is that our faithful and impartial performance of our duty in it will open to us a way to an everlasting life of moral freedom.

If this be, then indeed is there truth in this present world, and the only truth possible for finite beings: and it must be, for this world is the result of the Eternal Will in us, and this Will can have no other purpose with respect to finite beings than that which we have seen. The Eternal Will is therefore the Creator of the World, as he is the Creator of the finite reason. Those who will have that a world must have been created out of a mass of inert matter, which must always remain inert and lifeless, like a vessel made by human hands, know neither the world nor him. Reason alone truly exists. The Infinite in himself,—the finite in him; and in our minds alone has he created a world, or at least that by which and through which we unfold it. It is in his light that we behold the light, and all that it reveals to us. In our minds he continues the creation of the world, and acts on them by the call to duty. In our minds he upholds the world and the finite existence of which alone we are capable, by causing one state to arise perpetually from another. When he shall have sufficiently proved us for our further destination, and we sufficiently cultivated ourselves, by that which we call death, will

he annihilate for us this life, and awaken us to the new life wrought out for us by our virtuous actions. Our life is his life. We are in his hands, and remain in them, and no one can tear us from them.

Great living Will ! whom no words can name, and no conception embrace, well may I lift my thoughts to thee, for I can think only in thee. In thee, the incomprehensible, does my own existence, and that of the world, become comprehensible to me ; all the problems of being are solved, and the most perfect harmony reigns. Thou art best divined by humble, child-like simplicity ; thou knowest her heart, and art the always-present witness of all its dispositions, and though they should be mistaken by all the world, thou wilt not mistake them. Thou art her father, who lookest ever kindly on her, and all for her good. To thy decrees does she resign herself, body and soul. " Do with me what thou wilt," she says ; " I know that it will be good for me, as surely as I know that it is thou who dost it."

I veil my face before thee, and lay my finger on my lips. What thou art in thyself, or how thou appearest to thyself, I can never know. After living through a thousand lives, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this mansion of clay. What I can comprehend, becomes finite by my mere comprehension, and this can never, by perpetual ascent, be transformed into the infinite, for it does not differ from it in degree merely, but in kind. By that ascent we may find a greater and greater man, but never a God, who is capable of no measurement. I have and can imagine only this discursive, progressive consciousness, and how could I ascribe this to thee ? In the idea of personality is included limitation, and I cannot ascribe to thee one without the other. I will not attempt what is impossible to my finite nature ; I will not seek to understand thy nature in itself ; but thy relations to me, the finite creature, and to all finite creatures, lie open before my eyes. Let me only become what I ought to become, and they will appear to me more brightly, more clearly, than my consciousness of my own ex-

istence. Thou hast wrought in me the recognition of my duty, and of my destination in the rank of reasonable beings;—how, I know not and I need not to know. Thou knowest what I think and will; how thou canst know it, by what act thou canst attain this consciousness, I know not,—nay, I know that the idea of an act, and an especial act of consciousness, belongs to me, the finite, and not to thee, the infinite. Thou willest, for thou hast willed that my free voluntary obedience should have consequences through all eternity; but the mode of thy volition I do not understand, and know only that it cannot be like mine. Thy will itself is deed, but its mode of operation is entirely different from any which I can conceive. Thou livest and art, for thou knowest, willest, and workest every where present to the finite reason, but thou art not that which through all eternity can alone be regarded by me as an individual existence.

In the contemplation of this, thy relation to me, will I repose in calm blessedness. I know immediately what is necessary for me to know, and this will I joyfully, and without hesitation or sophistication, practise, for it is thy voice which commands me, the order of thy spiritual universe in me, and the power with which I shall perform my part in it is thine. What is by thy voice therein commanded to me is truly and certainly good. I am tranquil in all the events of this world, for it is thy world. Nothing can appear to me strange or perplexing, or discouraging, as surely as thou livest and I perceive thy life; for in thee, and through thee, O Infinite Power, do I behold even the present world in another light. Nature, and natural consequences, become unmeaning, empty words, as applied to the destinies and actions of free beings. Nature is no longer, but only thou art. It no longer appears to me as the grand aim and purpose of the present world, to bring forth that state of universal peace among men, and of boundless dominion over the mechanism of nature merely for its own sake, but that it should be the work of man himself, for all, and through all, a great free moral community. It is



the fundamental law of the great moral empire, of which the present world forms but a part, that neither any amelioration or any moral progress should be possible for an individual, by any other means than by his own virtuous will, and it is also true of communities. Thus it happens that the good intentions of the individual are so often lost to this world, when the will of the majority is not conformable to his, and have their result solely in the future. Thus it happens that the passions and vices of men co-operate in the attainment of good, not in and for themselves, for in this sense can never good come out of evil, but by holding the balance of the opposite vices, and at length, by their excess, annihilating them and themselves. Oppression could never have gained ground if the cowardice, baseness, and mutual mistrust of men had not opened a way to it. It will continue to grow worse, until despair shall once more awaken courage, and cowardice and slavery be swept away together. Then will the two opposite vices have annihilated each other, and the noblest product of human society, lasting freedom, come forth from their conflict.

The actions of free beings have, strictly considered, only results in other free beings; for in them and for them alone is the world; and that in which they all agree is the world. But they have these results through the Infinite Will, from whom individuals proceed, and the revelation of this Will to us is always a call to a certain duty; therefore even what we call evil in the world, the consequence of the misuse of freedom, proceeds also from him, and exists only as the occasion of duty. Did it not form part of the eternal plan of our moral culture, and that of our race, that the duties arising from it should be laid on us, they would not be so laid, and what we call evil would not have existed. Every thing that is, is good, as being suitable to its end. Only one world is possible, and that is good. All that happens in this world tends to the amelioration and culture of the human race, and by means of this to the attainment of the earthly object of

its existence. It is to this great plan we allude when we say, Nature leads men through want to industry, through the evils of general disorder to a legal constitution, through the miseries of continual wars to endless, everlasting peace. Thy will, O Infinite Being, thy Providence alone, is this higher nature. This also is best understood by the artless simplicity which regards this life as a place of probation, and culture a school for eternity, which, in all the events of life, the most trivial as well as the most important, beholds thy guiding Providence disposing all for the best, which firmly believes that all things must work together for the good of those who love their duty, and seek to know thee.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### FAITH.

OH, how have I wandered in darkness during the past days of my life, how have I heaped error upon error, and deemed myself wise ! Now first do I understand the doctrine which seemed so strange to me ; for now first do I comprehend it in its whole compass, in its deepest foundations, and through all its consequences.

Man is not the mere product of the sensual world, and the whole aim of his existence cannot be attained in it. His high destiny passes time and space, and all that is sensual. What he is, and what he is to make himself, he must know ; as his destiny is a lofty one, he must be able to raise his thoughts above all sensual limits ; where his true home is, thither must his thoughts necessarily fly, and his real humanity, in which his whole mental power is displayed, appears most when he raises himself above those limits, and all that belongs to the senses vanishes in a mere reflection to mortal eyes, of what is transcendent and immortal.

Many have raised themselves to this view without any course of intellectual inquiry, merely by nobleness of heart and pure moral instinct. They have denied in practice the reality of the sensual world, and made it of no account in their resolutions and their conduct, although they might never have entertained the question of its real existence, far less have come to any conclusion in the negative. Those who are entitled to say, " Our citizenship is in heaven, we have here no abiding place, we seek it in a world to come," those whose chief principle it was to die to the world, to

be born again, and already here below to enter on the kingdom of God, certainly set no value on what is merely sensual, and were, to use the scholastic expression, “transcendental Idealists.”

Others, who, with the natural tendency to sensuality common to us all, have strengthened themselves in it by the adoption of a system of thought leading in the same direction, can only rise above it by a thorough and persevering course of investigation; with the purest moral intentions they would be liable to be perpetually drawn down again by their intellectual mistakes, and their whole nature would be involved in inextricable contradiction.

For such as these will the philosophy, which I now first truly understand, be the first power that can enable the imprisoned Psyche to break from the chrysalis and unfold her wings; poised on which, she casts a glance on her abandoned cell, before springing upward to live and move in a higher sphere.

Blessed be the hour in which I was first led to inquire into my own spiritual nature and destination! All my doubts are removed; I know what I can know, and have no fears for what I cannot know. I am satisfied; perfect clearness and harmony reign in my soul, and a new and more glorious existence begins for me.

My entire destiny I cannot comprehend; what I am to become, exceeds my present power of conception. A part, which is concealed from me, is visible to the father of spirits. I know only that it is secure, everlasting and glorious. That part of it which is confided to me I know, for it is the root of all my other knowledge.

I know at every moment of my life what I have to do, and this is the aim of my existence as far as it depends on myself. Since my knowledge does not reach beyond this, I am not required to go further. On this central point I take my stand. To this shall all my thoughts and endeavours tend, and my whole power be directed—my whole existence be woven around it.

It is my duty to cultivate my understanding and to acquire knowledge, as much as I can, but purely with the intention of enlarging my sphere of duty ; I shall desire to gain much, that much may be required of me. It is my duty to exercise my powers and talents in every direction, but merely in order to render myself a more convenient and better qualified instrument for the work I am called to do ; for until the law of God in my heart shall have been fulfilled in practice, I am answerable for it to my conscience. It is my duty to represent in my person, as far as I am able, the most complete and perfect humanity ; not for its own sake, but in order that in the form of humanity may be represented the highest perfection of virtue. I shall regard myself, and all that in me is, merely as the means to the fulfilment of duty ; and shall have no other anxiety than that I may be able, as far as possible, to fulfil it. When, however, I shall have once resolutely obeyed the law of conscience, conscious of the purest intentions in doing so ; when this law shall have been made manifest in practice, I have no further anxiety ; for having once become a fact in the world, it has been placed in the hands of an eternal Providence. Further care or anxiety concerning the issue were but idle self-torment ; would exhibit a want of faith and trust in that Infinite Power. I shall not dream of governing the world in His place ; of listening to the voice of my own limited understanding, instead of His voice in my conscience, and substituting for His vast and comprehensive plans, those of a narrow and short-sighted individual. I know that to seek to do so, would be to seek to disturb the order of the spiritual world.

As with tranquil resignation I reverence the decrees of a higher providence, so in my actions do I reverence the freedom of my fellow creatures. The question for me is not what they, according to my conceptions, ought to do, but what I may do to induce them to it. I cannot wish to act on them otherwise than through their own conviction and their own will, and as far as the order of society and their own consent

will permit me ; by no means however to influence their powers and circumstances, independently of their own convictions. They do what they do on their own responsibility : in this I dare not interfere, and the Eternal Will will dispose all for the best. All that I have to do is to respect their liberty, and make no attempt to destroy it, because it appears to me ill employed.

I raise myself to this point of view, and become a new creature ; my whole relations to the present world are changed, the ties by which my mind was closely connected with it, and followed all its movements, are broken for ever, and I stand calmly in the centre of my own world. My eye only, and not my heart, is occupied with worldly objects, and this eye is "filled with light," and looks through error and deformity, to the True and the Beautiful. My mind is for ever closed against perplexity, and embarrassment, and uncertainty, and doubt, and anxiety. My heart, against grief and repentance as well as against desire. There is but one thing that I wish to know, and that I infallibly shall know, and I refrain from forming conjectures as to what I am sure I can never with certainty know. No possible event has power to agitate me with joy or sorrow, for I look down calm and unmoved upon all, since I am aware that I am not able to understand events in all their bearings. All that happens belongs to the everlasting plan of Providence, and is good in its place : how much in this plan is pure gain, how much is merely good as means to some further end, for the destruction of some present evil, I know not. I am satisfied with, and stand fast as a rock on, the belief that all that happens in God's world, happens for the best ; but what in that world is merely germ, what blossom, what fruit, I know not.

The only cause in which I can be deeply concerned is that of the progress of reason and morality in the minds of rational creatures, and this purely for the sake of this progress. Whether I am the instrument chosen for this purpose, or another, whether my endeavours succeed or fail, is of no import-

ance. I regard myself merely as a destined labourer in this field, and respect myself only inasmuch as I execute my task. I look on all the occurrences of the world only in their relation to this object, and it matters not whether I or another have the chief share in them. My breast is steeled against personal insults and vexations, or vain-glorious exultation in personal merit, for my personality has vanished in the contemplation of the great object before me.

Should it seem to me that truth has been put to silence, and virtue trampled under foot, and that folly and vice will certainly triumph; should it happen, when all hearts were filled with hope for the human race, that the horizon should suddenly darken around them as it had never done before; should the work, well and happily begun, on which all eyes were fixed with joyous expectation, suddenly and unexpectedly be turned into a deed of shame,—yet will I not be dismayed: nor if the good cause should appear to grow and flourish, the lights of freedom and civilization be diffused, and peace and good-will amongst men be extended, shall yet my efforts be relaxed.

Those apparently melancholy events may, for aught I know, be the means of bringing about a good result; that struggle of folly and vice may be the last that they shall ever maintain, and they may be permitted to put forth all their strength, to lose it in one final defeat. Those events of apparently joyful promise may rest on an uncertain foundation; what I regarded as love of freedom, may be but impatience of restraint; what I attributed to gentleness and peacefulness, may originate in feebleness and effeminacy. I do not indeed know this, but it might be that I had as little cause to mourn over the one as to rejoice over the other. All that I know is, that the world is in the hands of omnipotent wisdom and goodness, who looks through his whole plan, knows all its bearings, and will infallibly be able to execute whatever he intends. On this conviction I repose with a calm and blessed assurance.

That they are free and rational creatures, destined to make

progress towards perfect reason and moral purity, who thus exert all their powers in the promotion of folly and vice, need excite no violent indignation. The depravity of hating what is good for its own sake, and choosing evil because it is evil, for the mere love of it, which alone could justly awaken anger, I cannot ascribe to any human creature, for I know that it lies not in human nature to do so. I know that for all who act thus there is generally no good or evil, but merely the agreeable or disagreeable, and that they are not under their own control, but under that of natural appetite, which seeks the former, and flies from the latter with all its strength, without any consideration whether it be in itself good or evil. I know that being what they are, they cannot act otherwise than as they do act, and I am far from the folly of growing angry at what is of necessity, or seeing cause for indignation in blind and brute impulse.

In that indeed lies their guilt and their degradation, that they are what they are, instead of having striven to resist the current of passion and animal nature by the force of reason, as free and rational beings.

This alone could justly awaken my displeasure ; but here I fall into an absurdity. I cannot blame them for their want of moral freedom, unless I regard them first as free. I wish to be angry with them, and find no object for my anger. What they actually are, does not deserve it—what might deserve it, they are not ; and if they were, they would not deserve it.

My displeasure strikes a nonentity. I must indeed treat them and address them as if they were what I well know they are not, and manifest a noble indignation at their conduct, with a view of arousing a similar feeling in their own breasts against themselves, although I am conscious in my heart that no such feeling can be rationally entertained against them. It is only the acting man of society whose anger is excited by folly and vice : the contemplative man reposes undisturbed in the tranquillity of his own spirit.

Corporeal suffering, sorrow and sickness, I must indeed



unavoidably feel, for they are occurrences of my nature, and as long as I remain on earth I am a part of nature; but they shall not overcloud my spirit. They can reach only the nature with which I am in a wonderful manner united, not what is properly myself, the being exalted above nature. The certain end of all pain, and of all susceptibility of pain, is death; and among all which the man of mere nature is apt to regard as evils, this is the least.

I shall not die for myself, but only for others; for those who remain behind, from whose connection I am torn: for me the hour of death is the hour of birth to a new, more magnificent life.

Let my heart be once closed against earthly desire, and the universe will appear before me in a glorified form: the dead heavy mass, which did but fill up space, has disappeared, and in its place there rushes by the bright, everlasting flood of life and power from its infinite source. All life, O Omnipotent Father, is thy life! and the eye of religion alone penetrates to the realms of truth and beauty.

I am related to thee, and what I behold around me is related to me; all is full of animation, and looks towards me with bright spiritual eyes, and speaks with spirit voices to my heart. In all the forms that surround me, I behold the manifold reflections of my own being, as the morning sun, broken into a thousand dewdrops, sparkles towards itself.

Thy life, as alone the finite mind can conceive it, is self-forming, self-representing Will, which, clothed to the eye of the mortal with multitudinous sensuous forms, flows through me and the whole immeasurable universe, here streaming as self-creative matter through my veins and muscles—there pouring its abundance into the tree, the flower, the grass.

Creative life flows like a continuous stream, drop on drop, into all forms through which my eye can follow it, and into the mysterious darkness where my own frame was formed; dancing and rejoicing in the animal, and presenting itself every moment in a new form; the only principle of motion

that, from one end of the universe to the other, conducts the harmonious movement.

But pure and holy, and as near to thine own nature as to the eye of the mortal anything can be, when it forms the bond which unites spirit with spirit, and encompasses them all, is the breath and atmosphere of the rational world. Incomprehensible, unimaginable, yet visible to the mental sight. Hovering over this sea of light, thought passes from soul to soul, and is reflected back purer and brighter from that of a fellow-creature. By this mystery does the individual understand and love himself in another, and every mind develops itself from other minds, and there is no single man, but one humanity. By this mystery does the affinity of spirits in the invisible world pass into their corporeal nature, and manifest itself in two sexes, which, even if the spiritual bond could be broken, would, as creatures of pure nature, be compelled to love. It breathes through the tenderness of parents and children and brethren, as if the souls were of one blood like the bodies, and their minds but blossoms and branches of the same stem; and from these flows in wider and wider circles till it embraces the whole sentient world. The thirst after love lies even at the root of hate, and no enmity springs up but from friendship denied.

In that which to others appears a dead mass, my eye beholds this everlasting life and movement throughout the sensual and spiritual world, and sees this life for ever rising and refining itself to more and more spiritual expression. The universe is for me no longer that eternally-repeated play, that ever-returning circle, that monster swallowing itself up, to bring itself forth again as it was before; it has become spiritualized to me, it bears the stamp of spirit in a constant progress towards perfection.

The sun rises and sets, and the stars vanish and return again, and all the spheres move in their harmonious circling dance, but they never return exactly what they were before, and in the bright springs of life itself is life and progress.

Every hour which they lead on, every morning, and every evening, sinks with new increase upon the world; new life and new love descend like dew-drops from the clouds, and encircle nature as the cool night the earth. All death in nature is birth, and in death appears visibly the advancement of life. There is no killing principle in nature, for nature throughout is life; it is not death which kills, but the higher life, which, concealed behind the other, begins to develop itself. Death and birth are but the struggle of life with itself to attain a higher form, and how could my death be other—mine—when I bear in myself not merely the form and semblance of life, but the only true original and essential life? It is not possible that nature could annihilate a life which has not its origin in nature; the nature which exists for me, and not I for her.

Yet even this my natural life, even this mere semblance, clothing to mortal sight the inward invisible life, can she not destroy—she who exists for me, and exists not if I am not? My present life disappears only before the higher life developing itself from within; and what mortals call death, is the visible appearance of a second animation. Did no rational creature which had ever beheld the light of this world die, there would be no possible ground to anticipate a new heavens and a new earth; the only purpose of nature, to present and to maintain reason, would be fulfilled, and its span would have been complete. But the act by which she appears to destroy a being free and independent of her, is to the eye of reason the solemn announcement of a transition beyond her sphere. Death is the ladder by which my spiritual vision ascends to new heavenly life.

Every one of my fellow creatures, who leaves this earthly circle, and whom I cannot regard as annihilated, draws my thoughts after him beyond the grave. He is still, and to him belongs a place. Whilst we mourn for him here, as in the dark realms of unconsciousness there might be mourning when a man is to behold the light of the sun, above, there is rejoicing that a man is born into that world, as we citizens of the

earth receive with joy and welcome those born to us. When I shall be called on to follow them, there will be but joy for me, for sorrow remains in the sphere which I shall be leaving. The world of nature, on which but now I gazed with wonder and admiration, sinks before me. With all its abounding life and order and bounteous increase, it is but the curtain which hides one infinitely more perfect—the germ from which that other shall develop itself. My faith pierces through this veil, and broods over and animates this germ. It sees indeed nothing distinctly, but it expects more than it can conceive, more than it will ever be able to conceive until time shall be no more.

THE END.













